WAY OUT WEST

OR

THE FAVORITE SON

A DRAMATIC COMEDY IN FOUR ACTS

BY FERDINAND GRAHAME

PROPERTY OF
DICK FERRIS

PRINTED NOT
PUBLISHED

WAY OUT WEST

—OR—

THE FAVORITE SON,

—BY—

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CAST OF CHARACTERS.

Steve Grigsby, Captain U. S. A.
Sam Grigsby, a Texan Cowboy. } Twin Brothers.

Parson Parker, Chaplain of the Fort.
Charles Cavendish, Colonel U. S. A.
Check Carter, Lieutenant U. S. A.
Ikey Iverstein, of Chicago.
Cross Dog, a Cherokee Indian.
Stella Cavendish, the Colonel's wife.
Mrs. George Grigsby, the boys' mother.
Posey Parker, the "Little General."
Bright Light, a Creek Indian.

SYNOPSIS..

Act I.—The Captain—Evening.
Act II—The Cowboy—Night.
Act III—The Parson—Daybreak.
Act IV.—The Flag—Day.
Place—Fort Gibson, I. T.
Time—The Present.

Dec. 14, 1903
D.
4429

ACT ONE.

Discovered: Stella looking out window, R. U. E. Wears flowers in corsage.

Col.—

Enters at rise, C. D. L. Hat in hand.

What are you doing at that window? Watching for Grigsby's return.

C.

Stella—

Turns.

Certainly not!

Leaves window—goes down R.

Your jealousy of the Captain is unreasonable.

Col.—

Goes to window.

Well, it looked mighty suspicious.

Pulls down window shade.

Forgive me, Stella,

Down R. C. beside her.

But I cherish the very air you breathe.

Caresses her.

Stella—

Notices hat.

You're not going out?

Col.—

Yes—I must.

X's L. Puts hat on safe.

I've got to find out what the redskins mean by pitching their tepees so close to the fort. That young Jew that arrived this morning had a hard time getting through their lines.

To C.

Stella—

But Grigsby has your horse, hasn't he?

Col.—

Yes, and the only one the men left here at the fort. The Indians must have learned that all the men are absent at the new post—and that all the money for the pay-roll is due to arrive. They've got an idea they want that money.

Stella—

Sits L. of table R.

Grigsby went for the money, didn't he?

Col.—

Yes—$20,000—hope he gets back with it all right.

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Stella—

Aside.

The money!. Carter was right.

Col.—

What did you say?

Stella—

Nothing.

Aside.

I almost fear to be left alone with the lieutenant.

Aloud—rising.

And must you go to-night—this birthday night?

Col.—

Arm around her.

A soldier's duty, my dear.

Stella—

Are you sure you trust me, my husband? You know nothing of my past life, and—

Pauses.

When will Grigsby get back?

Col.—

Suspiciously.

Seems to me you're wonderfully anxious about Grigsby?

Suddenly sees flowers—points.

Those flowers!

Stella—

What about them?

Col.—

I saw Grigsby picking those flowers at daybreak—before he started!

Suddenly tears flowers from her bosom—up R.—raises window shade and tosses flowers out—pulls down shade again—then down C.

Stella—

Has X'd around to L. C. during business.

Charles, those flowers were picked for Posey.

Posey—

Enters C. D. R.—flowers in hand.

Here's your flowers. I caught 'em on the fly.

Down C.

Stella—

They were intended for you, Posey—Steve picked them before he left this morning.

Col.—

R. C. Confused.

Yes—I—I saw you outside and tossed them out to you!

X's L. to Stella—aside to her.

Forgive me.

Posey—

Pins on flowers.

I think its a shame that Steve had to go away on his birthday.

Col.—

He will probably be back tonight.

Up L. C.

Posey—

That's what I thought. So I ordered 'em to have the birthday dinner ready for him when he comes. And what do you think—his mother wasn't going to attend to a thing—acted as though she didn't care whether he got back or not. What makes her act so funny?

Col.—

Up L. C.—looking off L. 3 E.

Ssh! She is here.

Mrs. G.—

Enters L. 3 E.—sadly—X's down R. C.

Posey—

R. C.—Behind her.

What's the matter, Mother Grigsby—are you worrying about Steve?

Mrs. G.—

Half aside.

No—I am thinking of SAM.

Parson—

Enters D. C. L., followed by Lieut. Down C.

Come in, Lieutenant—my daughter's sitting room is the chief congregating place for the boys and girls.

Goes R. to Posey and Mrs. G.

Lieut.—

Down L. C.

It is not to be wondered at—Mrs. Cavendish is undoubtedly a charming hostess, as well as a DUTIFUL wife.

Meaning glance at Stella.

Stella—

Turns away L. Cor.

Col.—

Down L. of Lieut.

Indeed, she is—the BEST of wives—TOO good for an old jealous fool like me.

Half aside to Stella.

Stella, have you ever regretted marrying an old man?

Stella—

Trying to appear and speak brightly.

Old! Why, you are NOT old.

Col.—

Well, considerably older than YOU.

Passes hand over her hair.

I want you to be happy, my dear.

Turns to Lieutenant.

Lieut. Carter, you will be in command of the post during my absence. You are ranking officer until Capt. Grigsby gets back.

Goes R. to Parson.

Lieut.—

Salutes.

Yes, Colonel.

X's to L. and bows to Stella.

Posey—

R. aside.

I don't like to see that new lieutenant hanging around my sister.

To C.—aloud.

Lieut. Carter!

Lieut.—

L. with Stella—turns.

Yes, Miss Parker.

Posey—

Have you seen Ikey Iverstein yet?

Lieut.—

And who is Ikey Iverstein?

Posey—

He's a Jew—a chewing gum man—with lots of gall! I left him out at the barracks. Come on, lets go find him.

Lieut.—

Thank you, Miss Parker, but I am engaged at present.

Glances at Stella.

Posey—

How can you be ENGAGED to a married woman? Better not let her husband find it out!

Indicating Col.

Col.—

R. with Parson and Mrs. G.—hears Posey's words and laughs.

Posey—

I'll call Ikey in—HE'LL "engage" you.

Up to window R.—pulls at curtain—it comes down.

Dog gone it!

Parson—

R. Cor.—shocked.

Why, Posey!

Posey—

Well, that's what Ikey says!

Kicks curtain aside to R. C.—to window—calls.

Ikey! Ikey Iverstein!

Outside R.

Ikey—

Outside R.

Hullo!

Posey—

Come in here!

Ikey—

Outside R.

Can't just now—I'm busy catching an Indian.

Posey—

Looking out window.

Why, he is fighting with our poor Bright Light. Look there!

Pointing out window.

Parson, Mrs. G. and Col. go up R to window.

Lieut.—

L.—aside to Stella.

You look beautiful—beautiful—perfectly beautiful!

Stella—

Smiling—L. Cor.—aside to Lieut.

You've said that three times.

Lieut.—

Aside to Stella.

And I've THOUGHT it three MILLION times in the week I've been here.

Stella—

Aside to Lieut—indicating others.

Ssh! They'll hear you!

Lieut.—

Aside to Stella.

Do you LOVE Col. CAVENDISH?

Stella—

Aside to Lieut.—hesitatingly.

He is my husband.

Lieut.—

Aside to Stella.

And you hate him!

Pause.

You must get that money for me when it comes.

Stella—

Aside to Lieut.

I understand.

Goes up L.

Posey—

Up R. C.

Here they are!

Indicating C. D.—goes down R. C.

Ikey—

Enters C. D. R.—pulling Bright along after him.

I've got her! She scrapped, but I licked her! I've captured an Indian!

Down C. holding Bright with right hand.

Posey—

You chump! That girl BELONGS to this post!

Ikey—

What! Is she tamed?

Relieves Bright's hand.

Posey—

Of course, she's BLIND! She lives here!

Goes up again to window.

Ikey—

Turns quickly to Bright.

Then let me offer you a sample of my celebrated Chili chewing gum. Have a chew!

Offers gum.

LOOK at THAT!

Bright.—

How can a blind Indian LOOK? Pale face much crazy fool!

Meets Col., who caresses her. C.

Lieut.—

Colonel, are you not afraid of treachery—keeping that Indian in the fort?

Col.—

Not in the least—she belongs to the Creek nation—a friendly tribe. A year ago the Cherokees captured her—they were torturing her when I happened along—but too late to save her eyes. The fiends had burned them out!

Bright.—

Me Bright Light, once—eyes go out—me Dark Night now.

Mrs. G.—

Comes down R.

And she has never forgotten that she owes her life to the Colonel. She loves him with the fidelity of a slave.

Bright.—

Yes. Me no SEE—but me much LOVE!

Kisses Colonel's hand and goes up C.

Ikey—

Notices Mrs. G. turns R. to her.

I think I've missed you—let me offer you a sample of my celebrated Chili chewing gum.

Offers it.

Have a chew?

Mrs. G.—

Dignified.

Sir, I am not a woman—

Ikey—

Interrupts.

You are not a WOMAN? Are you a man in skirts?

Mrs. G.—

I am not a woman that takes any interest in chewing gum.

Parson—

Down C.—Indicating to Lieut.

Mr. Iverstein, this is Lieut. Carter.

Goes up to window to Posey.

Ikey—

Pleased to meet you.

X's L. to Lieut.

Let me offer you a sample of my celebrated Chili chewing gum.

Offers it.

Have a chew?

Lieut.—

Goes up L. to Stella.

Thanks, I never chew.

Ikey—

Oh, what a freeze out!

Horse effect in distance.

Posey—

Down a little.

Well, your hot air made a frost.

Parson—

Posey!

Posey—

Well, that's what Ikey says.

Ikey—

I don't need to SAY it, I'm freezing to death!

Turns up collar and X's to R. Cor.

Parson—

Looking out window.

Man on horseback, riding swiftly toward the fort. He waves a handkerchief! It's Steven Grigsby!

Horse effect increases.

Posey—

R. C. looking toward widow.

MY Steve!

Mrs. G.—

Down R.

Thank God, he is safely returned!

Posey—

To Mrs. G.

Aren't you glad you made the birthday preparations now?

Horse effect loud.

Parson—

At window.

Here he comes—the bravest Captain on the frontier!

Steve.—

Enters D. C. R.—down C.—kisses Mrs. G.

Mother!

Turns L. and salutes Col.

Money all right, sir!

Produces package of money.

Col.—

Any trouble?

L. C.

Steve.—

No, sir. $20,000 in $100 bills—two hundred of 'em.

X's L. and kneels beside safe—opening it puts bills in—closes and locks safe—turning combination.

Shall I retain the combination, sir?

To C.

Col.—

To C.

Yes, Capt. Its best that only one man knows it.

Steve.—

Yes, sir.

Salutes.

Bright goes to window—up R.

Mrs. G.—

To C.

Get ready for dinner, Steve. I'll see that they finish preparing it.

Exit L. S. E.

Col.—

L. C.

Anything new among the redskins?

Steve.—

They are very surly, sir—tomorrow it will not be so easy to get through their lines—by morning they will have completely surrounded the fort.

R. to Posey.

Col.—

Bad! Very bad! Should they learn we have no soldiers here at the garrison, they will attack us sure. I MUST get word to Gen. Butler.

Cross Dog—

Enters C. D. L. Comes down stage slowly R. C.

Ikey—

R. Cor. facing audience.

Indians! Why, those Indians wouldn't hurt a flea! I'M not afraid of 'em—just show me one—just bring one good, healthy red Indian here and I'll—

Turns L.—Sees Cross Dog—scared—clasps hands to hair—circles around Cross Dog—up L. C.

I'll bet I'm redder in the face than he is!

Exit C. D. L.

Col.—

And what is Cross Dog's desire?

Cross Dog—

Looks around.

Me no much talk! You got no soldier! Me got plenty braves!

Up to C. D.

You give Injin money—you go—or when big moon is—

Pointing up.

Me kill!

Exit C. D. L.

Col.—

He means it. The moon is full in two days. We have that much time. But I fear the Redskins will never allow us to get a man through their lines to Gen. Butler. I'm going to reconoiter.

Puts on hat.

I must learn how strong they are.

Up C.

Stella—

Meets Col. up C.

But now you don't need to go afoot.

Col.—

Oh, yes. My poor horse is tired, making that long trip both ways today. Besides, I can get in amongst the Reds better on foot.

Bright.—

At window.

No go horseback—Injun SEE—go FOOT back!

Col.—

To Stella.

See! Bright Light knows what is best for Indian scouting. Come, kiss me good bye, and I'm off.

Kisses Stella.

Stella—

It's too bad you can't wait until after the birthday dinner.

Col.—

Can't do it. Save some for me. Capt. Grigsby—you're in command. I won't be back before morning.

To C. D.

Steve.—

R. C. with Posey and Parson—salutes.

Yes, Colonel.

Col.—

Once more, good-bye.

Kisses Stella.

Lieut.—

Up L. C.

May good luck follow you, Colonel.

Col.—

Thank you.

Exit C. D. R.

Lieut.—

Up to C. D.—aside.

And never overtake you!

Looking off R after Col.

Bright.—
Me go part way.

Starts from window—stumbles over curtain.

What that?

Stella—

Picks up curtain and puts it in alcove—up C.

I'll show you the way, dear.

Leads Bright Light to C. D.

Bright.—

Exit C. D. R.

Lieut.—

Up C.—aside to Stella.

That money is in the safe—you MUST get me what I want!

Exit L. 3 E.

Stella bows affectionately.

Parson—

Down R.

Ah, he's a REAL Yankee Colonel—does his own reconnoitering.

Steve.—

Parson, I might know it's my birthday—

Parson—

Why?

Steve.—

Mother's sadness.

Looking off L. 3 E.

Posey—

To Steve C.

Why should she be sad on your birthday?

Steve.—

Haven't you ever heard the story?

Posey—

No.

Steve.—

Tell her, Parson. I never like to talk about it.

Goes up R. Looks out window.

Stella—

May I hear it, too, father?

Parson—

Coming down L. C.

Certainly.

Sits on table R.

You must know that Steve had a twin brother, Sam, who ran away from home when the boys were each ten years old. He has never been heard of since. It happened that it was his

mother's favorite who disappeared—and since then Mrs. Grigsby at times treats Steve as tho' HE were to blame for Sam running away. Especially on his birthday, rather, instead of being thankful that one noble son has been spared to her, she mourns the loss of the other.

Posey—

Well, what do you think of that? Isn't satisfied with what she's got and wants something she HASN'T got! When both of them are twins and just alike. I think Mrs. Grigsby is a chump!

Parson—

Rises.

Posey!

Posey—

As Ikey says!

Goes up C.—meets Steve.

Stella—

Father, come here.

Going up L. C.

Parson—

X's L. to her.

Well?

Stella—

Leave them alone together—I want to see you.

Parson—

Glances at Steve and Posey. Exit L. 3 E. with Stella.

Steve.—

Down R. C.

Your sister looks swell.

Posey—

C.

Yep—she's got on a new dress—I don't like its color. Say, Steve, what's the fashionable color now for young ladies?

Steve.—

I prefer WHITE ones.

Posey—

Well, you don't SHOW it—the way you cast admiring looks at our Indian girl. You think SHE'S AWFULLY pretty, don't you?

Steve.—

I never said so.

Posey—

But you ADMIRE her, don't you? I do.

Steve.—

Oh, yes—she's a dream—magnificent!

Posey—

Angry.

Oh! IS she? See here, Mr. Steve Grigsby, I won't have you admiring ANYBODY but ME—do you understand?

Steve.—

Unconcerned.

All right.

Turns away and sits L. of table R.

Posey—

Pause.

Well, hurry up! How do I took in MY new dress? Begin admiring!

Steve.—

Turns in chair—looks over her critically.

You look—great! Uniform bright—buttons all in place—shoes nicely polished—trousers—

Posey—

Quickly.

Steve!!

Steve.—

Unconcerned.

What time will dinner be ready?

Posey—

Well YOU'RE not ready for DINNER! Where's your dress suit?

Steve.—

Have I got to wear it?

Rises.

Posey—

Certainly! Your mother'll be awfully disappointed if you don't look just SO.

Steve.—

Don't fancy mother'll care particularly HOW I LOOK.

Posey—

Why, Steve—have you forgotten that it's your birthday?

Steve.—

It is SAM'S birthday too.

Half sadly—turns away.

Posey—

And haven't you any curiosity to know what I'm going to give you for a birthday present?

Down R. beside him.

Steve.—

Turns to her.

A kiss?

Posey—

No, sir—a beautiful scarf pin—

Produces pin.

With the number of your regiment on it—and THERE IT IS!

Sticks it in his shoulder.

Steve.—

Jumps slightly.

I've got it.

Takes pin from coat and sticks it in lapel—turns away and sits as before.

Posey—

Pause. To C.—Aside.

Pshaw! Thought I was going to get that kiss!

Turns to him—aloud.

Well, what have you got to say?

Steve.—

Looks up.

Me? As I don't see any sign of dinner, I think I'll smoke.

Produces cigarette case.

Posey—

Up to him—snatches case.

Give me that!

To C. again.

Steve.—

Rises.

But, Posey—

Posey—

No, sir—you don't smoke any cigarette NOW.

Steve.—

Why not?

Posey—

Hesitates slightly.

'Cause it makes your breath bad.

Steve.—

Aside—winks at audience.

Oh, I see.

Aloud—fiercely.

Give me back that cigarette case, or I'll take it away from you.

Starts toward her—facing her.

Posey—

WILL you?

Thrusts cigarette case in bosom—hands behind back, facing him.

Steve.—

Pause.

No, I guess I won't.

Turns away to R.

Posey—

Going L. of C.

Oh, I wish the Indians would lay down their arms.

Steve.—

To C.

I wish you would hold up yours.

Posey—

Why so?

Steve.—

So I could fall into them.

Posey—

That's 'cause I got on a new dress. You didn't offer to kiss me yesterday in my OLD dress.

Steve.—

Bluntly.

I'd kiss you if you didn't have a rag to your back!

Embrace—she hiding her face. She then looks up—he kisses her on forehead.

Posey—

Why do you kiss me on the forehead? Is my nose in the way?

He kisses her mouth.

Oh! Don't! Stop!

Steve.—

Why?

Posey—

I don't know—but that's what a girl always says when a fellow kisses her.

Steve.—

Kisses her again.

How do you like my kisses?

Posey—

They're awfully delicious.

Steve.—

Yes, that's what they ALL say.

Posey—

Breaks position.

ALL say! WHO say?

Backing to L. C.

Steve.—

Confused.

Why—all the other fellows here at the fort—they say—what I say—that the GIRLS say—what YOU say—

Pause.

WHAT did you say?

Posey—

L. C.

Steve Grigsby, if I thought you had ever kissed another girl—I'd never—

Pauses.

Steve.—

To R. of C.

Never—

Posey—

To C.

Never—

Pauses.

Steve.—

To C. Meeting her.

Never what?

Posey—

Embrace.

Never mind!

Steve.—

Holds her off at arms length.

Say—if you were me and wanted to get married—what would you do?

Posey—

I wouldn't.

Steve.—

But suppose you HAD to—

Posey—

Breaks embrace.

Wh-a-a-t!

Steve.—

Confused.

No, of course YOU wouldn't have to—

Posey—

Steve, everybody here at the fort thinks we're engaged.

Steve.—

Well, we ARE, aren't we?

Posey—

I suppose so, but I can't PROVE it.

Steve.—

Why?

Posey—

Holds out left hand—bare of rings.

Steve.—

Coolly.

I see.

Transfers ring to her hand.

Posey—

Looks at ring—then at Steve.

Guilty!

Embrace R. C.

Ikey—

Enters C. D. L. to see embrace. Down C.

Break away!

Steve goes R., Posey L.

Steve.—

Posey—who IS that?

Posey—

Aside

I'll make him jealous—I'll pay him back in his own coin!

To L. C. Sweetly to Ikey—aloud.

Why, Mr. Iverstein, how handsome you look!

Steve.—

R. C.

Posey—quit telling lies. Say! Who ARE you!

Ikey—

I am Ikey Iverstein, of Chicago—let me offer you a sample of my celebrated Chili chewing gum—the latest thing on the market. Have a chew?

Offers sample.

Steve.—

Ignores gum.

That's enough—if you've got any more ammunition, just fire it off outside.

Ikey—

R. C.

Why so?

Steve.—

You interrupted us—I was busy proposing to this young lady.

Ikey—

Well, you're not the only spark of fire—I am intending to do a little proposing of a proposal to her myself.

Steve.—

YOU!

Ikey—

So get out! You're froze out! She wouldn't wipe her feet on YOU!

Steve.—

No, but she WOULD wipe them on YOU!

Ikey—

Let the lady decide herself, which is to stay.

Looking at Posey.

Steve.—

Yes, let her decide.

Looking at Posey.

Posey—

L. aside.

Here's my chance.

Aloud. X'ing to R.

I shall be very happy to hear what Mr. Iverstein has to say.

Sits L. of table R.

Ikey—

Turns to Steve—with a grin.

I don't think YOU want to hear it, do you?

Steve.—

No, but YOU shall hear from me!

Up to L. 3 E.

I'll wait for you outside.

Exit L. 3 E.

Posey—

Why, Steve DID go!

Rises—runs up C. Calls off L. 3 E.

Steve! Come back here!

Pause.

And he won't turn back!

Half crying.

The idea of him really going away and leaving a poor, little, friendless, unprotected freckle-faced girl all by herself—just because—because—

Ikey—

Sings.

"Because I love you."

R. C.

Posey—

Turns savagely to Ikey.

But I don't love YOU—go and practice your love making on the Indians after this!

Ikey—

What? Me? An Israelite make love to an Indian? What do you take me for?

Posey—
Don't take you at all—wouldn't have you as a gift!
Angry—exit L. 3 E.

Ikey—
Well, wouldn't that freeze you?
Goes to L. 3 E.
He's waiting for me—with his fists doubled up!
Quick exit C. D. R.
Parson and Stella enter C. D. L.

Parson—
Down R. C.—seats Stella R. L. of table.
I think no one will disturb us here. Now what is this "terrible news."
Smiling.

Stella—
I—I hardly know how to tell you—but I MUST!
Pause.
You remember, father, five years ago—the time I spent a year in the East—

Parson—
When you finished your college course, yes.

Stella—
You THOUGHT I was at college—but in reality I was in New York—with—with the man I loved.

Parson—
Shocked.
Stella!

Stella—
I've never told you this before—my love may be my excuse—we were happy together a year—he was ordered West—he was reported killed at Fort Custer—two years ago I married Colonel Cavendish, and—
Stops.

Parson—
Pause.
Well?

Stella—
Rises frantically.
But he is not dead—he is alive! He came here a week ago!

Parson—
You mean—?

Stella—
The man is Lieutenant Check Carter!

Parson—
Carter!

Stella—

Yes!

Speaking rapidly.

And now he demands money—he commands me to get for him a thousand dollars, or he will tell the story of my past life to the Colonel!

Parson—

The blackmailing scoundrel! Does your husband suspect?

Stella—

No! He is insanely jealous—but it is of Captain Grigsby——he's absurdly suspicious of Steve.

Parson—

Gently.

Well, I will speak privately to the Colonel, and he will have Lieutenant Carter sent away.

Stella—

No, no! You must not do that!

Pause.

You force me to tell you all. I—I was never married to the Lieutenant—but my heart belongs to him still!

Turns away—hiding face in hands—sinking in chair L. of table R.

Parson—

Pause.

I—I won't reproach you, child!

Hand on her head.

A heart is the most unlucky present the Almighty ever gave to a woman. But the Colonel's honor must be preserved.

Stella—

Looking up.

Father, ask Steve for the money—he brought $20,000 to the fort today.

Steve.—

Enters C. D. L.—down C. quickly.

Has any body seen that Jew chewing gum peddler?

Fists clenched.

Parson—

R. C. to Stella.

Go, Stella—I'll see what can be done.

Stella—

With bowed head. X's L to L 3 E turns in door.

Father, ask Steve to help us.

Exit L. 3 E.

Steve.—

Looks after Stella wonderingly.

Anything I can do for you, Parson?

Turning to Parson.

Parson—

Steve, I need some money.

Steve.—

Hands in pockets.

How much?

Parson—

A thousand dollars.

R. C.

Steve.—

Removes hand—whistles.

Whew!

Down L. C.

Parson—

Don't ask me what I want it for.

Steve.—

Parson, I haven't got it. I'm broke—till next pay day.

Parson—

Hesitatingly.

You—you have $20,000 in that safe yonder.

Steve.—

But, Parson—I couldn't take THAT—it belongs to the soldiers.

Parson—

But you, being paymaster, could easily conceal the shortage.

Pause.

Steve.—

Pause.

Parson—I just CAN'T do it. I'd gladly give it to you myself—but I've lost pretty heavily on cards lately—I've got no salary due me in THAT bunch—

Indicates safe.

And it would really amount to robbing the United States.

Parson—

Moralizes.

Gambling! Gambling! Don't you know, my boy, that to take a man's money with cards is little better than STEALING it from him—

Recollects himself.

Oh, what business have I to moralize!

To Steve.

My boy, you've known me since childhood—you know I wouldn't ask this unless there was a good reason.

Steve.—

To C.

DON'T ask me, Parson—I CAN'T.

Parson—

Steve, you love my daughter Posey?

Steve.—

Yes.

Parson—

Arm around Steve's shoulder—C.

This money is—is to save her sister's honor.

Lieut.—

Enters C. D. L.—sees them—steps in alcove up C.

Steve.—

Pause—thinking—goes slowly to safe L.—drops on knee and opens combination.

I'm breaking a law of Uncle Sam—but there's a law of the heart that tells me, I've got no right to go back on my friends when they're down.

Steve.—

Opens safe—takes out package of money—extracts 10 bills. Aside as he counts bills.

For the sister of the girl I love.

Puts money back in safe—rises—to L. of C.—extends bills—aloud.

Here you are.

Lieutenant watching scene from alcove—unseen.

Parson—

Takes money—C.—Shaking Steve's hand.

God bless, you, Steve.

To R. C., retailing money in R. hand.

Steve.—

L. C.

It's all right—I can hide the loss someway—pay it back next quarter—and no one will ever know.

Lieut.—

Down C.

Guess I could GUESS, gentlemen!

Steve.—

Aside.

Carter! did he see me?

Lieut.—

R. C. to Parson.

One thousand dollars, I believe. Just the amount your daughter owes me.

Extends hand.

Parson—

Looks at Lieut. Slowly gives money.

Steve.—

Surprised.

And was it for YOU, Carter that I've robbed the United States—

Stops— recollects what he is saying.

Lieut.—

To C. Smiling—puts money in pocket—to Steve.

Just put the latter part of that remark in WRITING, Captain, will you?

Steve.—

What do you mean?

Lieut.—

There is very little money in circulation here at the fort, and in case the Colonel should discover this "ROBBERY," we might all be searched, this thousand dollars would be found on me—and I want something to clear ME—in case I should be suspected of the "ROBBERY."

Steve.—

Pause.

All right, I'll give it to you.

Goes above safe, L. Produces note book and pencil—tears out leaf.

Parson—

X's quickly to Steve L.

Steve, you must not. T'was for me you took the money—and I'll give him THAT in writing if he wants it.

Steve.—

No, I'LL give it to him. The money will not be found missing till I'm ready for it—I'm the only one who knows the combination.

Prepares to write.

Lieut.—

Sits L. of table R.—coolly.

Exactly—and you would be the first to be suspected. Your gambling debts are heavy, and I should be compelled to testify that I SAW YOU DO IT—also enlighten the Colonel regarding his wife's past life—unless you give me that acknowledgment.

Steve.—

Ready to write.

What shall I say?

Lieut.—

Simply admit that 'twas you who robbed the United States government—not I.

Steve.—

Darts angry look at Lieutenant—writes on top of safe.

Parson—

R. C. Aside to Lieut.

You have the money—why are you doing this unprincipled thing?

Lieut.—

Aside to Parson—angrily.

He is loved by all the men here at the post—I am HATED. This will prevent him lording it over me any longer.

Steve.—

To R. C.—reading paper.

"The money missing from the safe will be accounted for by me. I alone am responsible. Signed, Steve Grigsby, Paymaster."

Gives paper to Lieut.

Lieut.—

Rises—takes and glances at paper—pockets it.

Very good. Now, silence from you—and silence from me. Honor betwixt thieves.

Smiling.

Steve.—

Hotly.

Honor! You'd shoot me as quick as I'd shoot you—the only difference would be that I'd be shot in the back!

Parson up C.

Ikey enters L 3 E—down L. C. slowly—without seeing Steve.

Steve.—

Continuing to Lieut.

There'll come a time of reckoning 'twixt you and me, Carter. Some day I'll put my hand on the only cowardly traitor in the post—

Hand on Lieut.'s shoulder.

And say—

Sees Ikey C.

There's the chap that stole my girl!

Chases Ikey off stage, L. 3 E.—following him off.

Lieut.—

Up L. quickly—looking off L. 3 E.

Light headed fool—he's completely forgotten the safe! But I HAVEN'T.

Down quickly to safe—takes package of money.

This is a clean sweep that I didn't expect!

Pockets money—L. C.

Parson—

Down C.—frightened.

Man—what are you doing? You've taken ALL that money?

Lieut.—

All I could find—I always do.

Parson—

But—the men will kill you!

Lieut.—

Innocently.

ME? I think not!

Produces paper.

This paper does not mention any amount and 'tis signed by Steve Grigsby.

Pockets paper.

Parson—

Aghast.

My God!

Lieut.—

Come, Parson, join me in a smoke.

Takes Parson by arm—offering cigar—leads him up to alcove.

Posey—

Enters C. D. L.

I can't find Steve anywhere!

Down R. C.

Ikey—

Enters L. 3 E.—backing on—hand to eye.

Whew! That was a soaker!

Down C.—shows black eye to audience.

Posey—

To Ikey.

Hello! Have you seen Steve?

Ikey—

Ruefully. Hand to eye.

No—he saw ME!

Posey—

What's the matter with your eye?

Ikey—

We had a little argument—Steve and me—I tried to give him a little hot air.

Posey—

And what did HE give YOU?

Ikey—

A hot punch.

Posey—

What did he say?

Ikey—

Well, what he said was too strong for me to stand for—

Posey—

Was it?

Ikey—

So I fell down!

Posey—

Laughs and sits L. of table R.

Ikey—

So behold your battered hero.

Beside her—pointing to eye.

Will you marry me now?

Posey—

Looks up in his face.

Nit!

Ikey—

Think it over—I'm a pretty good thing—I'm fresh every day—no family ought to be without me—so kiss my busted eye and make it well.

Posey—

Rises—dignified.

Mr. Iverstein—I can only be your sister—good bye forever!

Ikey—

They kiss me good-bye—my sister always does.

Posey—

I couldn't kiss anybody but—

Pauses.

But a soldier.

Ikey—

I will become a soldier right away.

Posey—

Oh, I'm afraid you're not brave enough for a soldier.

Ikey—

Oh, yes, I am—here's a proof of it.

Pointing to eye.

Posey—

Then take the oath.

Ikey—

You can't say an oath I don't know already.

Posey—

Yes, I can, listen:

To C.—very flowery.

"I swear to be a soldier—and be true to Uncle Sam. For traitors and redskins—I do not give a——"

Looks at Ikey.

Ikey—

Supplies the word.

"Damn."

Posey—

Thanks!

Continues.

"Hurrah for Posey Parker shall be my battle-cry. And when I meet the enemy, I'll fight until I die."

Ikey—

Claps hands. In falsetto voice.

Hooray! Hooray!

Posey—

Down R. C.

Now, YOU say it.

Parson enters—up L. C.

Ikey—

X's to C.—imitates Posey.

"I swear to be a soldier—and be true to Uncle Sam. For traitors and for reskins—I do not give a ——"

Pauses—looking at Posey.

Posey—

Down R.—after a pause—supplies the word.

"Damn!"

Parson—

Up L. C.—shocked.

Posey!

Posey—

As Ikey says.

Indicates Ikey.

Ikey—

Continues.

"Hurrah for Posey Parker—shall be my battle-cry, and when I meet the enemy—"

Steve.—

Enters quickly L. 3 E.—to L. of C.

Ikey—

Turns and sees Steve—yells—rushes to window R. and jumps out.

Steve.—

Crazy fool! Made me forget to lock that safe.

Down L. C. to safe.

Parson—

Down L.—Above safe—aside to Steve—stays his hand.

Useless locking it now, Steve.

Steve.—

Aside to Parson.

Why not?

Parson—

Aside to Steve.

Lieutenant Carter took ALL the money while you were gone. I was powerless to prevent it.

Steve.—

Aside to Parson—aghast.

Took it ALL! The entire $20,000?

Parson—

Aside to Steve.

Yes, leave the safe open for a while. I MUST think of some way to get that money back into it.

Steve.—

Half aside.

And I must think—I DO think—that I've got to do some thinking—some mighty HARD thinking!

Posey—

To C.

What are you two whispering about?

Steve.—

To Posey.

We weren't whispering—we're—we're THINKING!

Parson—

Leans over safe—aside to Steve.

Steve, my boy, I'LL give you a receipt for the full amount gone—so they can't blame YOU.

Steve.—

Pause.

I think I'll take a receipt from Posey instead.

Posey—

What receipt?

Steve.—

This.

Kisses her.

Parson—

Aside.

I guess that receipt don't need a witness.

Goes up C.

Posey—

To Steve—mischievously.

Your kisses are lots nicer than Ikey's.

Goes to R. C.—beside table.

Steve.—

Astonished.

Have you been kissing him—that goggle-eyed, big-nosed sheeney?

To C.

Posey—

Demurely.

Yep! I kissed his busted eye and made it well.

Steve.—

Disgusted.

Miss Parker—all is over between us. Give me back my ring.

R. C. beside her.

Posey—

Frightened.

You don't mean it?

Steve.—

Yes, I do!

Aside.

For about ten minutes.

Turns to her fiercely.

Give it to me or I'll take it away from you!

Posey—

Slowly draws off ring.

Take it!

Throws ring on stage.

Sir, you are free!

Steve.—

Picks up ring.

I know it. I'm MORE than FREE—I'm LOOSE.

Pockets ring—R. C.

Mrs. G. and Stella enter D. L. 3 E.

Lieut. appears from alcove—up C.

Posey—

Give me back my scarf pin.

Steve.—

Pulls pin from lapel.

Take it!

Jabs it into her shoulder—goes L. C.

Posey—

Screams—pulls out pin.

You chump.

Puts pin in dress—throws herself in chair R.

Mrs. G.—

Down L. C.

Quarrelling again, children?

Smiling.

Stella meets Lieut.—up C.

Parson—

Comes down R. C.—L. of Mrs. G.

The usual daily disagreement—by morning the clouds will have rolled away.

Steve.—

I'm glad to see you're feeling better, mother.

Joins parson C.—they and Mrs. G. talk in dumb show.

Lieut.—

Up C.—aside to Stella.

I've secured the entire $20,000.

Stella—

Aside to Lieut.—astonished.

You've taken it ALL?

Lieut.—

Aside to Stella.

Yes—enough to take us far away. Will you go with me now?

Aside to Lieut.

Stella—

No! I WILL NOT desert my husband.

Lieut.—

Aside to Stella.

Stella, my love is stronger than ever—

Stella—

Aside to Lieut.

No! You ask me to dishonor the noblest man that ever lived. I will NOT go.

Down R.—above table—talks to Posey.

Mrs. G.—

To Steve.

And over what nonsense are you quarrelling with Posey this time?

Steve.—

To L. Cor.

She insists upon loving me too much, and I can't stand it!

Posey—

Over shoulder—seated at table, R.

I HATE you!

Steve.—

To Mrs. G.

SEE how dearly she LOVES me?

Mrs. G. laughs and goes up C.

Lieut.—

Down R. C.

Nothing is so easy as falling in love—except falling OUT of love.

Looking at Stella. Meaningly.

In fact, the women in this fort seem to be PERFECT examples of inconsistency.

Posey—

Rises—goes to Lieut.

What kind of a man are you to talk like that?

Lieut.—

Smiling.

Why, I TRY to be a gentleman.

Posey—

Why don't you experiment with something easier? This isn't your affair anyway?

To R. Cor.—angrily.

Lieut.—

My words were not directed towards YOU, young lady. 'Tis not surprising, however, to learn you are already becoming fickle, when one considers the striking example of untruth set you by your sister!

Steve.—

You infernal—

Starts R. towards Lieut.

Parson—

L. of Steve—catches his arm—aside to him.

Don't provoke him to quarrel—remember, the money is gone—he will do you a mischief!

Mrs. G.—

Down C.—strong.

Steve, did you hear what that man just said?

Steve bows head affirmatively.

Mrs. G.—

Don't you realize that he has assailed the honor of your friend's wife—your sweetheart's sister? Answer him as he deserves.

Pause—Steve does not move.

Well, we are waiting! Strike him to the carpet!

Stella—

Coolly.

I hardly think he will.

X's to Steve L. C.

I tell you in your teeth that a woman with a past is a symbol of untruth, and that the Parson's eldest daughter is no exception to the rule!

Steve.—

Between teeth.

You cur!

Starts to strike.

Lieut.—

Quickly shows him receipt—unseen by others. Aside to him.

Shall we expose matters?

Steve looks at receipt—then at open safe—turns away to L.

Lieut.—

Pocketing receipt unseen by others. X's to R. C.

I hardly think your men will in the future call you "the bravest captain on the frontier."

Mrs. G.—

C.

Steve Grigsby, are you a coward?

Steve looks her square in the face.

Parson—

L. C.

No, Mrs. Grigsby! That boy would dare to go where angels might draw back. You don't understand. Look at him—his eye is too straight—he looks you too square in the face for a coward.

Mrs. G.—

He still has a chance to redeem himself. The Lieutenant has not left the room.

Parson—

Mrs. Grigsby, you don't understand—

Mrs. G.—

I understand that in the presence of the girl he loves my son shows he does not possess that which woman loves best in man —COURAGE! I understand that in the absence of your best friend, you allow his wife to be insulted! Steve Grigsby, I am a soldier's daughter—I was a soldier's wife—and until today I thought myself the MOTHER of a soldier! I would suggest that you hand in your resignation to Col. Cavendish when he returns—

Up to C. D.

—And that you TAKE OFF the uniform you have DISGRACED!

Exit C. D. L.

Steve.—

Girls, kindly go, leave us alone.

Posey—

X's up C. to Lieut.

And I would suggest that YOU hand in YOUR resignation at the same time. It will be thankfully received by Uncle Sam.

Exit C. D. L.

Lieut.—

Aside to Stella.

Go to the barracks—I'll join you immediately.

Goes up C.

Stella—

Bows head affirmatively and exits C. D. R.

Steve.—

Up around to R. C. To Lieut.

You've won out, Carter—THIS time! Will you meet me, back of the fort, at sunrise?

Parson—

Down L. Cor.

Rather a PECULIAR kind of a COWARD—that.

Lieut.—

Up L. C.—to Steve.

Certainly.

Steve.—

Pistols or swords, which?

Lieut.—

Neither one. Hundred-dollar bills at 200 yards.

Taps breast pocket significantly—exit laughing L 3 E.

Parson—

To L. C.

Steve, my boy, can you ever forgive me?

Steve.—

Takes parson's hands.

It's all right.

Turns away to R.

Parson—

Down L. C.—aside.

A good ending to a life of truth—today I have lied—I have stolen—I have wrecked my friend's honor!

Buries face in hands, leaning on safe.

Steve.—

Parson, don't let that safe get locked—you may find a chance to put the money back into it before I get back.

Parson—

Turns.

What do you mean?

Steve.—

I've been THINKING.

Slowly takes off coat and cap.

I'm going to take off the uniform I've DISGRACED!

Tosses coat and cap on table, R.

Parson—

To L. C.

You're not going to resign?

Steve.—

No, I'm going to put on a COMMON coat—and I'm going to General Butler.

To R. of C.

Parson—

But you'd never get through the Indian lines now. They'll shoot you to pieces.

Steve.—

But if enough of the pieces get through to Butler to warn him 'twould save the garrison. I tell you Cross Dog meant business tonight.

X's L. and closes safe door and handle.

There—it will stay unlocked unless some one turns the combination.

Parson—

C.

Is there anything I could say that would induce you to stay?

Steve.—

STAY! When both Posey and my mother think me a coward? Never! Good-bye, parson.

Shakes hands.

Don't tell them where I've gone.

To L. 3 E.

If I get through to Butler alive my soldier's honor will be redeemed.

Exit L. 3 E.

Parson—

C., brokenly.

He—he will never come back!

Up to L. 3 E.

Steve!

Looking out L. 3 E.

He's dropped from the window—he's gone!

Down C.

What am I to do.

Pause—produces prayer book from pocket—opens, reads.

"Remember I am with you always."

Looks upward.

Amen!

Up to L. 3 E.—repeating, sotto voice.

Mispah! Mispah!

Looking upward.

Do Thou also be with HIM through his path of danger and bring him in safety back to us!

Exit L. 3 E.

Sam—

Appears at window R. 3 E.—quickly jumps through—pistol in hand—turns, looking out window—pistol held ready.

Guess none of 'em saw me.

Down C.

The redskins seem to have this place pretty well corralled.

Looking around.

Wish I could rope in some grub. Haven't had a bite since yesterday morning. Don't see any of Uncle Sam's boys around. Must be all full. Wish I was full—then I wouldn't be so empty.

Sees coat on table, L.

Hello, what's this?

Picks it up.

Uniform. Guess I'll put it on.

Does so.

These West Pointers—I know 'em—they've got no use for a cow-puncher—as a rule—but they can't refuse these brass buttons a bite to eat.

Puts on cap. Has laid pistol, belt, etc., on table R.

Parson—

Enters L. 3 E.

Can't find a soul that'll talk about Steve—they're all down on him.

Down C.—sees Sam.

Oh, my boy! So you DIDN'T go, after all!

Arm around him, R. C.

Sam—

Looks at Parson—puzzled.

No, I guess I didn't, did I?

Parson—

Sees pants.

Where did you get those pants?

Sam—

Galveston, Texas, Parson, though I don't know that its any of YOUR damn business.

Parson—

Steps back shocked.

My boy, I never heard you swear before.

Sam—

No, I guess you didn't, did you?

Parson—

Aside.

This trouble has turned his head.

Aloud.

What's the matter, Grigsby?

Sam—

Grigsby!

Snatches pistol from table—levels it at Parson.

Where did you ever hear that name?

Parson—

Pause.

My boy—you're nervous—your hand trembles—better put down that gun—you might pull the trigger.

Sam—

Slowly lowers gun.

Well, you've got nerve—if you ARE a gospel shark!

Parson—

"Gospel shark!" Have you been drinking?

Sam—

No, I wish I had.

Tosses gun back on table.

Parson—

Then you're crazy.

Sam—

No, I'm not crazy—but it's the first time I've been called that name in fifteen years.

Parson—

Better go and lie down, Steve—you'll feel—

Sam—

Quickly.

Steve! Do you know Steve Grigsby?

Hands on Parson's shoulders.

Parson—

Dazed.

Do I—do I know—

Pause.

Are you Steve Grigsby or a lunatic?

Sam—

Neither one. I'm known in Texas as the "Broncho Buster" —my right name is Grigsby all right, but my front handle is SAM!

Parson—

Starts back.

Sam!

Pause.

Steve's twin brother!

Pause.

What an idiot I am not to have realized it before!

Sam—

Yes, I think so myself.

Parson—

What are you doing HERE?

Sam—

Hunting for something to eat.

Parson goes L. C.—stands thinking.

Sam—

Continues.

Got any hash in sight?

Pause.

My stomach is emptier'n a ranch after a cyclone has struck it.

Pause, no answer.

Got a hunk o' corn beef to throw away?

Pause.

Well, say—just let me LOOK at the knives and forks, will you?

Pause.

Are you asleep?

Pause—aside.

Same deal! Never asked anybody for a bite to eat since I left Texas that they didn't immediately go into a trance.

Parson—

Suddenly aside.

I'll ask him!

Aloud.

What did you say?

Turns to Sam.

Sam.—

What did I—

Looks at him, disgusted.

Oh, come off.

Parson—

Looks at feet—steps aside.

I am not standing on anything.

Sam—

I asked you if you had something to—

Pause.

Drink.

Parson—

All you want, my boy—but listen first.

Sam.—

Here goes for a temperance lecture before I get the booze.

Parson—

No, listen, SOBERLY!

Sam—

There you go—"SOBERLY."

Parson—

Listen. Your brother, Steve, has been driven away—by a Lieutenant here in this fort—

Sam.—

Picks up pistol.

Introduce me to that Lieutenant.

Parson—

Hand on Sam's—forces him to lay down pistol again.

His going leaves this same lieutenant in command here—and I tremble to think of the possible consequences. I want you to take Steve's place till he gets back.

Sam.—

Eh!

Parson—

I'll explain it later on. Perhaps it may clear your brother's name—you don't understand—but you will—will you?

Sam—

You're giving me a guessing game, Parson.

Parson—

Your MOTHER—she'll relent tomorrow—she'll miss her Steve. Will you do it—for MOTHER?

Sam—

Half aside.

Mother; In York state—fifteen years ago—a sweet-faced lady—I called her mother—and she answered, "Yes, dear."

Pause.

I'll do it, Parson.

Offers hand.

Parson—

God bless you, boy!

Shaking hand.

Sam—

Well, I doubt THAT—but—who am I to be?

Parson—

You're Captain Grigsby—in command of this fort at present—you're in love with my daughter, Posey—

Sam—

Am I? First time I'd heard of THAT!

Parson—

—And you must put on some military pants. Take those off.

Sam—

Looking downward.

Well, 'scuse me, Parson—but have you a private dressing room? There's holes in my underwear.

Parson—

Up C.

Here—go in there—

Pulling curtain aside.

And toss 'em out to me.

Sam—

Up C. quickly and into alcove.

Don't lose 'em!

Parson—

Picks up cowboy coat and hat R.

Your clothes must be hidden somewhere.

Up L. of alcove.

Now, remember, you love my daughter, Posey—remember to agree to everything she says—and remember you smoke cigarettes.

Sam—

Inside alcove.

No, I don't!

Parson—

You've got to! Steve does! And you don't drink.

Sam—

Inside alcove.

Yes, I do!

Parson—

You mustn't—Steve don't.

Sam—

Inside alcove.

I've got myself mixed up in a short deal.

Tosses out cowboy pants.

There you are!

Parson—

Picks up pants.

Now, I'll hide these somewhere.

Starts to L. 3 E.

Sam—

Pokes head through curtain.

Hold on! What am I to wear?

Parson—

Stops up L.

Oh, I forgot. Stay there—I'll bring you a pair of Steve's pants.

Exit L. 3 E.

Sam—

Calls after Parson.

Say! Stick a sandwich in the pockets of those pants.

Posey—

Enters C. D. L.—eating a piece of pie.

What do you want of a sandwich?

Sam—

Looks at her.

Howdye do!

Posey—

I'm pretty near as hungry as you were when you got back—and dinner isn't ready yet. Want a bite of pie?

Sam—

Head in curtain.

You bet I do!

Posey—

L. C.

Come out and get it.

Sam—

Pause.

No—don't think I care for any pie.

Posey—

Looks at him.

Why, how pale you look! Say, Steve, I didn't sympathize with your mother when she roasted you. Don't let it trouble your mind.

Sam—

It isn't my MIND that's troubled—it—it's my body.

Posey—

What's the matter?

Sam—

I—I—I—I—took off my—my uniform—

Posey—

'Cause your mother told you to—I understand—don't you care.

Sam—

I don't. I'm putting it on again.

Posey—

What for?

Sam—

Oh, just for a change.

Posey—

A CHANGE?

Sam—

Aside.

Yes—a change of pants.

Posey—

Aren't you dressed?

Sam—
Dressed? Oh, yes. I'm very dressed!
Posey—
Then come out here.
Sam—
Eh?
Posey—
Come here—I want to give you back your pin.
Sam—
I'd need several pins.
Disappears.
Posey—
Are you coming?
Sam—
In a minute.
Inside alcove.
Posey—
Come OUT here!
Sam—
Inside alcove—aside.
"Remember to agree to everything she says."
Appears—holding window curtain in front of him—aloud.
Here I am.
Down C—aside.
I hope nobody rolls up this window shade.
Posey—
Sees him.
What you got that curtain for?
Starts towards him.
Sam—
Retreats up R. C.
Don't you DARE look out of that window!
Retreats into window—hanging up shade as he does so.
Parson—
Enters L. 3 E.—carrying pants in right hand—to alcove.
Here they are.
Pause—opens curtains carefully.
Why—he's gone! Where can he be?
Backing towards R. 3 E.
Sam reaches from behind curtain—seizes pants from Parson's hand—takes pants behind curtain.
Parson—
Looking around bewildered.
Where did they go?

Posey—

Up L. C.

Where did WHAT go, papa?

Parson—

Confused.

Why the—the Indian!

Posey—

What Indian?

Parson—

Why—the cowboy Indian.

Posey—

Astonished.

The "cowboy Indian?"

Parson—

I mean—the Indian cowboy.

Sam—

Enters from window—R. 3 E.—in uniform.

Here I am—in full uniform.

R. C.—catches parson's eye.

AGAIN!

Posey—

L. C.

You were a chump ever to take it off.

Sam—

Down R.

My guns—longest time I've been without 'em in ten years.

Buckles on belt, etc.

Parson—

To R. C.—aside to Sam.

You musn't wear those with your uniform.

Sam—

R.—Buckling belt—aside to Parson.

Say, Parson—I've agreed to everything YOU said—I've agreed to everything SHE said—you've got to give in to ME in THIS. They're all I've got left from my old Texas ranch.

X's to L. C.—meets Posey.

Posey—

Sees belt, etc.

Take off those horrid things!

Sam—

L. C.—aside.

"Agree to everything she says."

Aloud.

All right, what you say goes.

X's to left corner—unbuckling belt.

No, I can't do it.

Buckles belt.

Lieut.—

Enters C. D. L.—down C.

Indian beacon lights burning on all the hills.

Notices Sam.

Hello, BRAVE boy!

Mrs G. enters L. 3 E. Stella enter C. D. R., remaining R. C. Mrs. G., L. C.

Sam—

Parson, come here.

Parson X's L.

Who IS that?

Parson—

That's the man that drove—

Sam—

That's enough.

Pushes Parson away—up stage L. C.—to Lieut. sweetly.

Did you speak to me, Lieutenant?

Lieut.—

Surprised.

Yes, I said—

Notices belt.

Carrying an arsenal around now, to cover up your cowardice, eh?

Sam—

Slowly.

Well, I WAS going to keep 'em ON, but since I've seen YOU, I think I'll take 'em off.

Unbuckles belt etc., and tosses same to stage, L.

Lieut.—

To L. C.

What kind of a bluff are you trying to run?

Sam—

'Tain't a bluff, pard!

Knocks Lieut. down.

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

Sam, Posey, Stella, Lieut., Parson and Mrs. G. discovered seated at table —up C—remains of dinner on table—all with wine glasses filled, patriotic song at rise.

Sam—

Rises from chair at rise—filled wine glass in hand.

Well, I reckon I'M DUE to make a speech. All I can say is—

Pause.

May all of you always be branded "U. S."

Raises glass about to drink—wears guns, etc.

All rise—glasses in hand—about to drink.

Posey—

Catches Sam's glass just as it reaches his mouth.

Steve Grigsby! Are you going to drink THAT?

Sam—

Hesitates—lowering glass.

Eh?

Posey—

Reproachfully.

I thought Steve Grigsby didn't drink.

Sam—

Looks at Posey—glass in hand—slowly lowers glass and sets it on table.

I—I reckon STEVE DON'T.

All glasses in hand—waiting for toast.

Posey—

Takes Sam's glass—tosses contents on stage, C.—fills glass from water pitcher.

I don't love a man that drinks—you'll take YOUR toast in WATER.

Gives glass.

Sam—

Takes glass—aside to Parson.

I reckon this is what STEVE would do.

All ready to drink.

Lieut.—

Speaking of WATER—there's no moon tonight—will have rain before morning. I'd better pull down the flag.

Does so.

Parson—

You're right, Lieutenant.

Posey—

Reaches over table and stays Lieutenant's hand.

Don't pull it CLEAR down, Lieutenant. Tie it there and let it wave over us tonight—Steve's birthday night.

Flag draped above table.

Sam—

Glass in hand—standing above table.

We couldn't drink a toast under a better roof.

Looking up at the flag.

Well, here's to the bunch!

Looks around—suddenly to Lieut.

By the way, Lieutenant—before you drink that toast—it occurs to me that you called me "a coward" this evening. I don't remember that you've apologized yet.

Lieut.—

Standing L. of table—glass in hand.

I think I did. You knocked me down—you saw me "in the dust at your feet"—isn't that apology enough?

Parson—

X's Mrs G. to Sam's side.

Let ME give the toast.

Arm around Sam's shoulders.

Here's to the noblest boy that ever breathed the air of the territory—and made it purer.

Posey—

Glass upraised.

To Captain Steve Grigsby!

All drink—replace glasses—go down stage except Posey, Sam and Mrs. G Stella down L. C.—Lieut down L. with Stella—Parson down R.

Sam—

After drinking toast.

And "Steve Grigsby" drinks WATER!

Replaces glass—turns to Mrs. G.

Mother, have you thought it over? Is "Steve Grigsby" a COWARD?

Mrs. G.—

Embraces and kisses Sam—R. of table C.

My boy!

Posey—

Comes around L. of table—pulls at Sam's clothes.

Steve Grigsby—take off those horrid guns—go and put on your dress suit and let's dance.

Sam—

Breaks embrace with Mrs. G.—turns to Posey.

Eh?

Posey—

Cert. Ikey has got a zither—this is a birthday dance, you know.

Mrs. G. exit, C. D. L.

Sam—

Parson, think Captain Grigsby had better put on a dress suit —with Indians itching to scalp us all?

Taking off belt, etc.

Lieut.—

L. with Stella.

Why not? A Yankee can wear a dress suit at his own funeral.

Posey—

Besides—I can LOVE you better in a dress suit.

Takes belt, etc., away from Sam as he takes same off—lays them on table up C.—retains knife.

Steve, where did you get this hunting knife?

Sam—

Hesitates.

I—I FOUND it.

Posey—

Looking at knife.

But your initials are cut in the handle—"S. G."

Sam—

That don't stand for "Steve Grigsby"—that stands for—

Looking Posey in the face.

—"sour grapes."

Posey—

Puts knife on table—catches Sam's arm and takes him to L. 3 E.

Go and put on your dress suit.

Sam—

Just a minute.

X's R. C. to table—gets bottle.

Posey—

Steve Grigsby, what are you doing with that whiskey?

Sam—

X'ing to L. 3 E.

Set it on the bureau and **LOOK** at it, while I'm putting on my dress suit.

Exit L. 3 E.

Ikey—

Enters C. D. R.—in uniform—down C.

I'm a soldier!

Posey—

R. C.—looking at Ikey.

Well, if you ARE, you want to shave off that NOSE.

Ikey—

To Lieut.

Do you need an extra man?

Lieut.—

Looking Ikey over.

Well—YOU don't LOOK anything EXTRA!

Ikey—

But I AM! YOU don't know what I know—and as we stand here, man to man and face to face, I want to ask you—

Lieut.—

Half frightened.

What?

Ikey—

If you'll take a sample of my celebrated Chili chewing gum—

Offers sample.

Lieut.—

Amazed—slaps down Ikey's hand.

No!

Ikey—

Say, I'm a soldier now—and I want some military construc tions.

Lieut.—

Go ask the Captain!

Turns L. and talks to Stella, as they go up L. together.

Posey—

Meets Ikey C.

Captain Grigsby will be back in a minute—in the meantime go and get your zither.

Ikey—

All right.

Exit C. D. R.

Lieut.—

Up L.—aside to Stella.

Do you hear? While they are dancing we can easily slip away. Come—I'll saddle the Colonel's horse.

Exit L. 3 E.—with Stella.

Parson—

R. C. aside—looking at safe.

That safe hasn't been locked yet—I'm not going to let it out of my sight while there's a chance to get that money back into it.

To C., looking at safe.

It's like locking the stable after the horse has been stolen—but I'm not going to let that safe out of my sight.

Posey—

Down L. C.

What's the matter, papa?

Parson—

Confused.

Nothing, my child.

To change the subject.

Are you enjoying yourself, my dear?

Posey—

You can just bet your boots I am.

Parson—

Look down at feet.

I wear SHOES!

Posey—

—As IKEY says.

Parson—

Well, Posey—go and dance—I'm tired—I think I'll take a nap.

Up to Alcove, C—aside.

I'll not let that safe get out of my sight!

Exit in alcove and closes curtains.

Posey—

Around to R. C.—speaking towards alcove.

You won't sleep much—after we begin to dance.

Sam—

Enters L. 3 E.—in dress suit.

I'd like to meet the man that invented these clothes. Where's my guns?

Starts towards table, up C.

Posey—

Up to table quickly—stops Sam.

You can't put those awful guns on—not with a dress suit.

Sam—

I've got to get SOMETHING on for protection—look at this—

Indicating shirt front.

—that's white—and it's a dead cinch for a man to shoot at.

Posey—

One would think you never had on a dress suit before.

Sam—

L. C.—aside.

I HAVEN'T.

Posey—

Down C.—beside Sam—producing cigarette case.

Now that you've been good—you may have just ONE cigarette.

Produces cigarette—puts case in Sam's pocket—puts cigarette in his mouth—finds match in other vest pocket—lights cigarette.

Isn't it GOOD?

Going R. C.

Sam—

Grimaces as he smokes.

I'M the one that's GOOD.

Ikey—

Enters C. D. R.

I'm a soldier now—and I'm just hitting the HIGH places.

Down C.

Sam—

L. C.

YOU here?

Ikey—

Yes, I never leave myself behind when I go anywhere.

Sam—

You'd better go "anywhere" and 'tend to your own business!

Ikey—

I haven't any.

Pause.

I was told to come to YOU to LEARN my business—but since I'm here, if you haven't any objections, I'll make love to Posey a while.

Turns R., towards Posey.

Posey—

R. C.

YOU don't care how much he makes love to me, do you, Steve?

Sam—

L. C.

No, I don't care.

Posey—

Steve Grigsby!

Sam—

Oh! Yes, of course I care. Of course STEVE CARES!

Turns L.—aside.

And SAM cares.

Posey puts one foot on top of other, R. C.

Ikey—

To Sam—L. C.

It's up to YOU!

Sam—

Turns to Ikey—savagely.

And YOU'LL get all that's coming to YOU!

Ikey—

Turns R.—sees Posey's feet.

Say—Posey—you're standing on your foot.

Posey—

If I don't I'll kick YOU OUT!

Sam—

To Ikey—approaching him meaningly.

Say, isn't a HINT as good as a KICK!

Ikey—

Looking Sam in the face—turns away—aside.

See those EYES!

Aloud to Sam.

Say, please don't start anything here.

Posey—

R. C.—angrily.

What do YOU WANT here?

Ikey—

Looks at Sam, who is still in threatening attitude.

I—I want something to eat!

Posey—

Looks at table—up C.

I'll fix you.

Up to table—takes oyster can.

Here's the last oyster left in the fort.

Upturns can—oyster falls in hand—forces it into Ikey's mouth.

Guess THAT'LL hold you for a while.

Replaces oyster can on R. of table, up C.

Sam—

L. C.—sotto voice.

—As Ikey says.

Posey—

X's to L. 3 E.

Fill this fellow up on what's left, Steve—while I go and put on my new dance dress.

Exit L. 3 E.

Sam—

L. C.—cigarette in mouth—aside.

Said she didn't love a man that drank. I'll fix this fellow. He's likely to be in my way.

Aloud—X'ing up R. C.—places a chair L. of table, C.

Sit down!

Ikey—

Goes L. C.—looking towards L. 3 E.

I'm a soldier and I haven't got time.

Sam—

Oh, sit down.

Sits on edge of table C.

'Twon't take you more'n fifteen minutes to stay a quarter of an hour.

Pause.

I'm your Captain, and I COMMAND you to sit down!

Ikey sits L. of table C.

Sam—

Say—you want to marry Posey, don't you?

Ikey—

Cert.

Sam—

But suppose she won't have you?

Ikey—

Then I should positively refuse to marry her.

Sam—

Say, if you don't let her alone I'll blow your brains out.

Ikey—

I haven't any.

Sam—

Well, I'll bore a hole in your forehead and let the gas escape.

Ikey—

If you do, I'll have you arrested!

Sam—

I think I'll practice on you NOW.

Reaches in hip pocket.

Ikey—

Starts up frightened.

Don't you dare pull a popper on me!

Sam—

Produces bottle from hip pocket.

'Taint a gun.

Holds up bottle.

'Taint a bad idea to be fixed with a gun, tho'.

Puts pistol from table C. in hip pocket—turns to Ikey.

Say, you look like a hard drinker.

Ikey—

Sits again.

I ain't—I drink EASY.

Sam—

Well, you look as tho' you NEEDED a drink, and I'll take one with you.

Sits on edge of table as before—picks up two glasses and fills them from bottle in hand. Gives one to Ikey.

Ikey—

Takes glass—looking at it.

Ah! This is the stuff that makes us millionaires.

Drinks, glass in R. hand.

Sam—

As Ikey drinks—pours whiskey from his glass into oyster can at his right—fills glasses again.

Yes, it's the stuff that makes us wear old clothes.

Ikey—

Drinks and chokes.

Holy Moses! That stuff is strong!

Sam—

Same bus. with oyster can.

Have another.

Fills glasses as before.

Ikey—

Say, ain't you coming a little swift?

Sam—

Can't come too swift for an Israelite. A Jew can stand anything.

Ikey—

Yes, we can stand everything—we can do everybody—we can go everywhere—except to purgatory.

Drinks as before.

Sam—

Same bus. with can.

Have another.

Fills both glasses again, emptying bottle.

Ikey—

Remonstrating.

Say, I'm not a tank!

Sam—

That's only because the chance was never offered you.

Still has cigarette in mouth.

Ikey—

Sees empty bottle in Sam's hand.

Jerusalem! Have we emptied the whole bottle?

Getting drunk.

Sam—

Yep—but there's plenty more.

Sits bottle down and picks up oyster can.

Here's some more they can expressly for the soldiers. Have some whiskey.

Fills Ikey's glass from the can.

Ikey—

No, thanks—I don't drink.

Sam—

You THINK you dont, but you DO.

Forces him to drink and immediately fills glass again.

Ikey—

Say, ain't you going to give me those military constructions? Business first and whiskey afterward.

Sam—

No hurry.

Forces him to drink as before.

With ME, all my life it's been WHISKEY first and BUSINESS afterward.

Fills Ikey's glass again and puts down oyster can.

Ikey—

I feel sick.

Sam—

You ain't half as sick as THIS will make you.

Produces cigarette case—puts cigarette in Ikey's mouth and lights it.

Have a cigarette?

Lights his own, which has gone out—puts that also into Ikey's mouth.

Have another!

Pockets cigarette case.

Now go to bed!

Ikey—

Rises—staggering—thickly.

I see the lights a burnin' in the New Jerusalem.

Staggers C.

Sam—

You're full. Go to bed.

Ikey—

C., staggering.

I WON'T go to bed!

Sam—

You won't?

Picks up hunting knife from table.

Ikey—

Sees knife.

No—I'll "heick" to bed.

Sam—

Replaces knife.

I'll see you again.

Down R. C.

Ikey—

Not if I see you first, you won't.

To L. 3 E.—meets Posey.

Posey—

Enters L. 3 E.—in ball dress.

Hello!

Ikey—

Staggers around to her L. 3 E.

Hello!

Posey—

You're not mad at me, are you?

Approaches Ikey.

Ikey—

Get off the grass!

Pushes Posey away.

Posey—

Indignant.

You've been drinking—you're disgraceful.

Ikey—

In L. 3 E.

That's right. HE called me FULL—and YOU call me DISGRACEFULL.

Exit L. 3 E.

Posey—

Turns to Sam.

Are YOU responsible for THAT?

Indicating, off L. 3 E.

Sam—

ME? You know I never DRINK.

Sits R on edge of table.

Posey—

To C.

Say! I want to SEE you.

Sam—

Coolly.

Look.

Posey—

I'd just as SOON look—it seems an awfully long time since I saw you—ALONE.

Meaningly.

Sam—

Half aside.

Yes, and it's nearly TWICE as long since I saw you.

Posey—

Steve, I've been counting on this birthday of yours for six months.

Sam—

Have you? Then you're just twenty-three weeks ahead of ME.

Posey—

I was an awful chump to get mad—can you forgive me?

Sam—

To R. C.—extends hand.

Cert. Shake hands on it.

They clasp hands C.—Bus. of Sam putting Posey's right hand around his neck—ducking under it.

Posey—

In embrace.

This is FRIENDSHIP, isn't it.

Sam—

Yes, and the friendship has got to be cemented.

Starts to kiss her.

Posey—

Breaks away—runs to L. C.

After a while.

Sam—

Don't run away.

Places chair from table R.—R. C.

Sit down.

Places chair from table up C.—R. C.—side by side and sits.

Posey—

L. C.

I can't. I'm waiting for Ikey.

Sam—
Sit down, and he'll be back in ten minutes.
Posey—
And if I DON'T sit down, how long will he be?
Sam—
Fifteen.

Sprawls on chairs, occupying both seats.

Sit down!
Posey—

Looks at Sam.

I don't see any seat.
Sam—
Have one on me.

Patting lap.

Posey—

Sits on safe, L.

You forget the distance that separates us.
Sam—
I'll make it closer.

Picks up chair—sitting in it—takes it L. C. and sits R of safe. Looks at Posey and smiles. Posey looks down at Sam and smiles.

Sam—
Say, I'd like to kiss you, may I?
Posey—
Do you want me to give you a written permission?
Sam—

Rises—starts to kiss her—stops and turns away. Aside.

No, it's STEVE'S girl.
Posey—
That's right—you're just as happy now that you DIDN'T kiss me.
Sam—

L. C.

But are YOU?

Pause.

Say—I'm in love—
Posey—
And have you ever been in love with any other girl but ME?
Sam—
Well, I'm more than twenty-one.
Posey—
Not MUCH!

Turns away—on safe.

Sam—

L. C. Aside.

Here's where I'm due to propose to her—I've got an idea that's what Steve would do.

Aloud.

Say! I've got an idea—

Posey—

Curtly.

You want to have less ideas and more sense.

Sam—

Sotto voice.

That's true.

To Posey.

I am here, today—for the express purpose—of expressing my purpose—

Pause.

—I THINK—

Posey—

DON'T, Steve—don't THINK—nature hasn't provided you with the necessary apparatus.

Sam—

Rises.

Don't joke with me, Posey—I—I—

Voice breaks—turns away, to R.—sits in chair that he left there.

Posey—

Pause.

Why don't you talk?

Sam—

R. Turns.

I—I ain't got anything to say—I'd just begun to think I was standing up pretty well before you—when a word from YOU knocks me down.

Pause.

If I've said anything I'm sorry for, I'm glad of it.

Pause. Aside.

I've got to say it, **STEVE** would.

Aloud. Blurts it out.

Say, will you marry me?

Posey—

Curls herself up on safe.

Not today—I don't love you today.

Sam—

I—I don't want you to LOVE me—it's plenty for me to touch the atmosphere—that—

Posey—

Jumps from safe.

Say, how many times are you going to propose to me today?

To R. C.—beside him.

Sam—

Looks up.

Was I?

Posey—

You've been smoking too many cigarettes. Give me that cigarette case.

Sam gives it.

Posey—

Takes case.

You don't get it again tonight.

Sam—

Aside.

Thank the Lord!

Posey—

Takes pin from dress.

Here's your scarf pin.

Jabs it in his shoulder.

Sam—

Ouch!

Takes out pin—looks at it.

Posey—

Pause.

Well, don't I get anything in return?

Sam—

Holding out L. hand—bare of ring.

You'll get a cussing if you stick me again like that.

Bright.—

Enters C. D. R.—down C. quickly—feeling her way—in low, eager voice.

Captain! Captain!

Sam—

Rises R.

Here I am, Bright Light.

Bright.—

Who ELSE here?

Posey—

R. C.

Nobody but me—Posey.

Bright.—

You go—me want pow-wow with Captain.

Posey—

Shall I go, Steve?

Sam—

Yes, better—she says she wants to talk to me alone.

Posey—
Haven't you got anything to give me before I go?

Sam—
Nothing but—

Starts to kiss her—pause.

—shake hands.

Posey—

Gives him left hand, meaningly.

Take the LEFT one.

Hand shake.

Sam—
You'd better "heick" to bed—as Ikey says—I—I am much obliged for this scarf pin.

Turns R.—putting pin in lapel.

Posey—

Up to L. 3 E.—turns—aside—looking at left hand.

It IS a left one—he won't give me back the ring.

Exit L. 3 E.

Sam—

R. C.

Well, Bright Light, what is it?

Bright.—

C.—in suppressed voice.

Me been out to stable—Lieutenant saddle Colonel's horse.

Sam—
What?

Goes up R. and looks out window.

Why, it's dark at the stables, Bright Light. How could you SEE THAT?

Down R. C.

Bright.—

Pitifully.

Dark ALL time—for ME.

Sam—
That's so—I'd forgotten.

Bright—
Me no see—me HEAR—me KNOW—Lieutenant saddle horse—he much quiet—then he sneak back.

Sam—
You stay here, Bright Light—

Up to C. D.

I'll go and see what it means.

Exit C. D. R.—closing door.

Bright.—

Me watch for Colonel—Colonel no come.

Going L.—feeling her way—finds fireplace—lies down in front of fireplace.

Me much tired.

Lieut.—

Enters quickly, L. 3 E. with Stella—Stella goes R. C.—both in traveling costume—Lieut. locks door L. E. 3.

All dancing in there—our departure will not be noticed for some time.

Down C. to Stella.

I've already put the saddle on the horse—he'll carry double.

Bright—

Rises to sitting posture.

Horse tired.

Lieut.—

Sees Bright—staggered—aside.

Did she hear me?

Goes L. to Bright and picks her up—aloud.

Bright Light, you must go to bed.

Pushing her toward L. 3 E.

Bright—

Indicating R. C.

Who there?

Lieut.—

Nobody. There's no one here but you and me.

Unlocks door L. 3 E.

Bright—

Then who you talking to?

Lieut.—

Talking? To myself.

Bright—

You been drinking firewater, eh? THAT make you talk to yourself.

Lieut.—

Pushes Bright out L 3 E.—closes door and locks it again—turns down C.—to Stella.

Whew! That was a close call.

Stella—

R. C.

It may be a warning—we'd better not go.

Lieut.—

Not go—'tis too late to back out now. We'll try to get through the redskin lines—it's a dark night—if we don't meet the Colonel returning, we'll be all right.

Stella—

Check, until YOU came here there was no thought of disloyalty in my breast.

Lieut.—

Stop your preaching—did you inherit that from your father? Here, take this money—

Produces package of bills and gives it.

'Twill be safer with you in case we're caught.

Stella—

Places money in bosom.

Let us go—quick.

Lieut.—

Finds and picks up knife from table C.

This is a dainty thing—shall I take it with us?

Stella—

Meets Lieut. C.—with hand on his makes him lay down knife.

No—it makes me shudder. Come—let us go.

Lieut.—

Replaces knife—right arm around her—leads her to door, C.

Come, the horse is waiting.

Sam—

Opens C. D. as Lieut. reaches it.

You're a liar. The horse has gone to sleep.

Lieut. and Stella—

Together—start back.

Steve!

Sam—

Enters—turns and locks door—leaving key in lock.

And that's a horse on you.

To Lieut., down C.

Lieutenant Carter, you stole that money—you're trying to steal the Colonel's wife—for both of these you may have your excuse—but HANG a man that'll steal a HORSE!

Lieut.—

R. of C.—in Sam's face.

Did you unsaddle that horse?

Sam—

C., in Lieut's. face.

I cannot tell a lie—I did it—with my little hatchet.

Pause.

The redskins surround the fort—you and Stella would never

get through—and I was AFRAID for you.

Pause.

Outside that door—

Indicating C. D.

I smelled money in the air.

X's R. C. to Stella.

I'll trouble you for that $20,000.

Extends hand.

Stella—

To Lieut.—L. C.

Shall I give it to him?

Sam—

R. C., L of Stella.

What the devil has he got to do with it?

Looking over shoulder at Lieut.

Cough up!

Extending hand.

Stella produces money from bosom —slowly—and gives it up.

Sam—

Takes money.

Thanks, fair lady, thanks.

Lieut.—

L. C.

Better put it in the safe.

Sam—

No, the safe might be "ROBBED!"

Meaningly.

I'll put it in my POCKET.

Does so—in inside pocket.

Lieut.—

L. C.

You're a damn fool!

Sam—

C.

You KNOW 'em, don't you?

Lieut.—

L. C.

Yes—I'm one MYSELF!

Sam—

Say, Lieutenant—guess you'd better "heick" to bed—as Ikey says.

Goes up R. to window—pulls curtain aside—looks out.

Lieut.—
Everything seems to be off. I'll go to bed.

Goes up C.—unlocks C. D.—opens it and is about to exit—suddenly looks off R.—aside.

The Colonel!

Quickly shuts C. D. and locks it and takes key. To L. 3 E.—unlocks same—opens door—standing in door L. 3 E.

Guess I WON'T go to bed.

Exit L. 3 E.—shutting door—noise heard L. 3 E. of key turning in lock.

Stella—

Down R.—calls.

Steve!

Facing audience.
Sam doesn't reply—looking out window.

Stella—

Pause—louder.

Steve!

Sam—

Eh?

Turns—down C.

Did you call ME?

Stella—

Pause—looking at Sam.

Steve Grigsby—I— THANK you!

Extends hand.

Sam—

Pause—looking at Stella.

And "Steve Grigsby" says—"you're welcome."

Takes Stella's hand and shakes it.

Colonel—

Outside C. D.—shakes door, C.—knocks.
Picture—Stella and Sam.
After pause—knocks again—pause

Open this door!

Tries—then shakes door, C.

Stella—

Hearing Col.'s voice, R. C.

My husband!

Sam has been listening to Col.—turns up towards C. D.

Stella—

Catches Sam's arm, C.

Don't!

Sam—

Turns to Stella.

Why not?

Stella—

It's my husband—he'll KILL you!

Holding Sam.

Sam—

Why should he?

Tries to shake her clutch off and to get to C. D.

Colonel—

Outside—shaking and rattling C. D.

Open this door, I say!

Stella—

Still holding Sam.

Don't you understand? He's JEALOUS of you, Steve. Please GO!

Sam—

Looks at her.

All right.

Goes to L. 3 E.

Colonel—

Outside C. D.—shaking door.

Open this door or I'll break it down.

Sam—

Reaches door L. 3 E.—about to exit —finds door locked—turns to Stella.

What's the answer?

Stella—

Don't let the Colonel in.

R. C.

Sam—

Don't know why I SHOULDN'T—I'D just as soon MEET the Colonel.

Tries C. D.—finds it locked—draws pistol—places muzzle at C. D. lock—fires and blows away lock.

Come in, Colonel!

Throws open door and goes down L. C.

Col.—

Enters C. D.—down C.—looking at Steve and Stella alternately.

I saw Steve Grigsby's face at that window as I came up.

Indicates window up R.

Col.—

Coldly.

It is three o'clock in the morning—the door was locked—all HONEST wives should be asleep—the explanation must come from him.

Indicating Sam—L. C.

You go to your room.

Takes Stella's arm—leads her to C. D.

Stella—

In C. D.

Steve, put that money back in the safe.

Exit C. D. L.

Sam—

L. C.—above safe. Produces package of money and starts to put same in safe.

Col.—

Down L. C. quickly.

No, you don't—that's got the government stamp on it. I'LL keep that!

Takes and pockets money in inside pocket—to C.

Sam—

L. C.—looks at Col.

You're a FOOL!

Col.—

C.—looks at Sam—pause—hotly.

And YOU are a CUR.

Sam—

To L. C.—hotly.

Colonel, you can't CALL ME THAT!

Col.—

Is resting hand on table up C.—hand rests on knife—picks it up and looks at it.

A DEAD CUR is better than a LIVE DOG!

Clenches knife and starts for Sam. L. C.

Sam—

Colonel, I don't want to hurt you!

Clinches—struggles for knife.

Lieut.—

Enters L. 3 E.—watching scene—steps in window up R.

Sam—

During struggle bites Colonel's hand—knife drops to stage—struggle continues.

Stella—

Appealingly to Col.

Let me EXPLAIN!

Lieut.—

Down C. quietly—picks up knife and stabs colonel—drops knife and retires into window up R., unseen.

Bright—

Enter L. 3 E.—calling.

Colonel! Colonel!

Col.—

After stab breaks away from Sam, staggers to R. C., clutching at side.

Steve Grigsby—you have killed me!

Falls C.—dies.

Sam—

Astonished after Col. falls—bends over him.

Colonel!

Pause.

Colonel!!

Pause.

Are you hurt, Colonel?

Bright—

L. C.—horrified.

Killed!

Pause.

Killed!!

Pause.

Lieut.—

Face appears—behind curtain of window up R.—watching scene.

Sam—

Looks up—sees Bright—astonished—bends over Col.—feels his pulse and heart.

Colonel—are you hurt?

Bright—

L. C., repeating.

Killed!

Sam—

Pause—Col.'s hand in and heart under left and right hands respectively.

My God, he's DEAD!

Bright—

As before.

KILLED!

Sam—

Rises—turns to Bright L. C.

Child—this is no place for YOU!

Takes Bright to L. 3 E. Exit L. 3 E. with her.

Lieut.—

Down C., quickly, looking toward L. 3. E.—picks up knife.

Initials on the handle—"S. G."

Pockets knife—pause.

Everything is NOT off!

Stoops over Col.'s body and gets money from Col.'s pocket—rises—looks toward L. 3 E.—retires quickly into window up R. as before.

Sam—

Enters L. 3. E., walking backward, brokenly.

He—he attacked me—HE pulled the knife—I didn't mean to kill him.

Looking off L. 3 E.

She—she didn't see—she COULDN'T see—thank God, SHE'S BLIND!

Lieut.—

Enters from window—places left hand on Sam's right shoulder—holds knife in right hand.

But I'M not blind!

Parson—

Enters from alcove—places left hand on Lieut's right shoulder.

Neither am I!

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

Sam—

Discovered on rampart up C.—looking off stage.

The timber around us looks peaceful enough in the quiet morning air, but to me every tree seems a sleeping tiger. Oh! I've lived among the Redskins—I know the way they prepare for a fight.

Parson—

Discovered leaning on cannon up R.

I ordered this cannon loaded this morning—the only piece of artillery we have, but 'tis something. I fear we can make but a poor defense.

Sam—

Comes down C.

Parson, I've been thinking what Steve would do in a case like this, and I've figured it out that I OUGHT to do exactly what HE did do! I'm going to get through to Gen. Butler.

Parson—

Down R. C.

Oh, my boy—your brother has perhaps met his death—if you go too, your mother will be left alone.

Sam—

Parson, if I stay the Lieutenant may any minute flash that knife and accuse me of the Colonel's murder last night. I'm a cowboy—mebbe I can get through the lines where another would fail. I MUST go—it's for Steve's sake as well as my own.

Parson—

But you can't cross the gulch?

X's L.

Sam—

Can't eh? For my brother's sake I'd cross hell on an icicle. I've got my guns.

Tapping belt.

Parson—

Excited.

Well, if the reds surround you and you empty your guns, don't stop to reload 'em—club 'em—give 'em the butt ends in their skulls like this—

Imitates blow.

Kill a redskin at every lick.

Recollects himself.

God forgive me, I'm teaching this boy how to commit murder.

Sam—

Shakes hands with Parson.

Don't fear for me, Parson.

Laughing.

When I get fairly started I'll go so fast the reds won't be able to see me for the dust I'll make.

Up on ramparts C.

Say good bye to Posey and mother—if I don't come back let 'em still think it was Steve.

Disappears over ramparts—exit L. U. E.

Parson—

Dejected.

HE'S gone, too; Oh, if I could only get hold of that money and get it back into the safe.

L. C.

Lieut.—

Enters R. 2 E. with Stella—to C.

Who was that just ran for the woods?

Indicating off L. U. E.—Stella R. C.

Parson—

Grigsby. He is going to try to get through to Butler.

Lieut.—

You were a fool to let him go. It looks like running away, as though he were afraid he'd be accused of MURDER.

Parson—

Oh, I don't think he'll be accused. You forget that the pistol shot woke me up last night. You forget WHAT I SAW.

Lieut.—

Coolly.

And YOU forget that Bright Light heard the Colonel's dying words—you forget this little piece of paper—

Producing confession.

—Which gives a motive for the killing—you forget this knife—

Produces hunting knife.

—Stained with the Colonel's blood, and the initials "S. G." on the handle.

Parson—

Turns away to L.—aside.

Oh, I wish Steve were here.

Lieut.—

Pockets knife and paper serenely.

Now parson, let's change the subject.

C.

Your daughter want's you to marry her—

Parson—

Turns—faces Lieut.—perplexed.

My daughter wants me to marry her—

Lieut.—

—To me.

Parson—

Aghast.

What? With her husband lying dead in the fort? Stella, do I understand that YOU consent to this?

Stella—

Bows affirmatively.

I HAVE consented.

Parson—

It is sacrilege!

Pause.

I won't do it!

Lieut.—

To Parson, meaningly.

You WON'T do it?

Parson—

I—I mean I can't do it—I—I haven't performed a marriage ceremony in years—I—I don't know the text—

Lieut.—

Episcopal clergy are not supposed to memorize the text—I believe they read it from a book. Let me see your prayer-book.

Extends hand.

Parson slowly produces book and gives it.

Turns to index—runs finger over it.

"Marriage"—page—

Turning leaves.

—91—

Finds it.

Here we are. All you have to do is to read these lines—while she—

Indicating Stella, R.

—And I answer "Yes."

Returns book to Parson, with bow.

Parson—

Pause—book in hand.

I WON'T do it! Stella, if you persist in this, I'll tell that it was Lieut. Carter who killed the Colonel!

Lieut.—

Pause—coolly.

And who would believe a preacher who had robbed a safe?

Stella—

Turns—faces Lieut.—slowly.

YOU—YOU killed my husband?

Parson—

He did! I SAW him do it! Will you marry him NOW?

Lieut.—

Extends arms to Stella.

Won't you?

Stella—

Pause—to Lieut.'s embrace. R. C.

I WILL!

Parson—

Dumbfounded.

Stella!

Stella—

In Lieut.'s arms—to Parson.

I told you father, I loved him still.

Lieut.—

Takes Stella to R. 2 E.—stops and looks back.

Don't try to get away, Parson—we'll find you, wherever you are, within the hour.

Exit R. 2 E. with Stella in embrace.

Parson—

Stands aghast L. C.

I—I am flabbergasted!

Hand over mouth quickly—pause—removes hand.

As Ikey says!

Pause—looks at book in hand.

I'm DAMNED if I'll do it!

Clasps hand over mouth—business down C.—then in extenuation.

Well, if I did do it, I would be damned—eventually.

Goes up C., pocketing book.

Ikey—

Enters L. 2 E.—head wrapped in towel—arms full of whisky bottles, half full, etc.

This is all the whiskey in the fort—I won't drink another drop—today.

Throws bottles into well L. C.

That settles it—I can't drink another drop—today.

Parson—

Up C.—aside.

There are plenty of other prayer-books in the fort—I'll get 'em and destroy them all.

Down C.—sees Ikey.

What is the trouble with your head?

Ikey—

L. C.

It feels as tho' it was a football and everybody was kicking it.

Parson—

Aside.

HE can help me.

Aloud.

Orderly!

Ikey salutes weakly.

I want you to find for me all the Episcopalian prayer-books in the fort, and bring 'em here to me—within ten minutes.

Ikey—

Yes, Parson.

Salutes as before.

Parson—

To L. 2 E.

And keep it quiet. Get them—steal them if you must—but don't ASK anybody for them.

Exit L. 2 E.

Ikey—

I won't.

Posey—

Enters R. 2 E.—chewing gum.

Ikey—

L. C.—turns to Posey.

Have you got an Episcopalian prayer-book?

Posey—

C.

Yes, why?

Ikey—

Staggering.

Go and get it—I want it.

Leans against well.

Posey—

You look as though you NEEDED a prayer-book. Say. what made you get so full?

Ikey—

Whiskey.

Pause.

Say, I had a funny dream last night. I dreamt I was awake—and when I woke up what do you think?

Posey—

I dunno.

Chewing gum.

Ikey—

I was asleep.

Posey—

Approaching him.

What's the matter with you?

Ikey—

I'm bughouse.

Posey—

Ikey, I tremble—I turn pale—in the presence of your breath.

Ikey—

Yes, my mouth tastes as though a Chinese family had just moved out of it.

Posey—

Want to chew my gum till recess?

Takes gum from mouth and offers it.

Ikey—

Nope!

Posey—

Let me offer you a sample of my celebrated Chili chewing gum. Take the bad taste out of your mouth.

Offers gum sample.

Ikey—

Looks at gum—turns up nose.

No, I won't chew my own gum.

Posey—

Say, you chew that gum or I'll call Captain Grigsby—take your choice!

Ikey—

I choose—

Reaches for gum.

To chew.

Chews gum—gulps.

Oh, I swallowed half of it!

Posey—

That won't hurt you.

Ikey—

Won't it? You don't know what this gum is MADE OUT OF!

Leans against wall.

Posey—

L. C.

I'll hurry and get you that prayer-book—you need it.

Starts toward R. 2. E.—running.

Lieut.—

Enter R. 2 E.—meets Posey.

Hello, what's the hurry?

Posey—

AM I in a hurry?

Lieut.—

Aren't you?

Posey—

Nope!

Lieut.—

Then what IS the matter with you?

Posey—

I'm bughouse!

X'ing to R. 2 E.

Lieut.—

What?

Posey—

Turns.

As Ikey says.

Exit R. 2 E.

Lieut.—

Turns L.—sees Ikey.

Hello! What brings you here?

Ikey—

My legs.

Approaches Lieut.

Lieutenant, have you got an Episcopalian prayer book?

Chewing gum.

Lieut.—

Have YOU?

Ikey—

ME? What do you take me for—a Mormon?

Lieut.—

What are you doing out here? After some of the women, I suppose.

Ikey—

No, they're all after ME.

Chewing gum.

Lieut.—

R. of Ikey.

You're a fool!

Ikey—

L. of Lieut.—meaningly.

Well, I'm mighty CLOSE to one.

Pause.

I don't want to be a soldier any more. I'd rather sell chewing gum. Let me offer you a sample of my celebrated Chili chewing gum.

Takes gum from mouth and offers it.

Lieut.—

Oh, go to the devil!

Goes R.

Ikey—

C.

What's the use—I'd rather you paid my fare back to Chicago.

Lieut.—

Turns fiercely.

If you don't stop bothering me, I'll PAY YOUR FARE to the devil.

Draws pistol and shows it.

Ikey—

One way or the round trip?

Pause.

Say, have you got an Episcopalian prayer-book?

Lieut.—

Have YOU?

Pockets pistol.

Ikey—

ME? What do you take me for—a Quaker?

Turns L. X'ing to L. C.
Lieut. turns away—R.

Bright—

Enters L. 2 E.—feeling her way.

Ikey—

Meets Bright, L. C.

Say—have YOU got an Episcopalian prayer-book?

Bright—

No—me don't believe in pale-face God.

Goes up C.

Ikey—

L.—Pause.

Lieutenant Carter!

Lieut. looks up.

YOU don't, either, do you?

Exit L. 2 E.

Lieut.—

R. C.—in thought.

The Parson is clever. He is collecting all the prayer-books in the fort.

Pause.

But I have a prayer-book.

Bright—

Down C.—hears Lieut.'s last words.

Why don't you read pale-face prayer-book, then, eh?

Lieut.—

Bright Light—you no love pale-face prayer-book, eh?

Pause.

Bright—

C.—shortly.

No!

Lieut.—

You love—scalp, eh?

Bright—

Shudders.

No!

Lieut.—

You love—Colonel—eh?

Bright—

Colonel!

Brokenly.

Me love Colonel—and Colonel dead.

Bursts into tears—dropping on knees C.—face covered with hands.

Posey—

Enters R 3 E.—prayer-book in hand—remains up L. C. unseen—watching Bright and Lieut.

Lieut.—

Close beside Bright.

WHO kill Colonel?

Bright—

Looks up—vindictively.

ME KNOW!

Lieut.—

WHAT kill Colonel?

Bright—

Knife!

Lieut.—

Produces knife—gets Bright's right hand—places knife therein.

Look!

Bright—

Pitifully.

Me no look—me no SEE.

Lieut.—

FEEL!

Bright—

Passes hand over blade—stops.

What that?

Lieut.—

Blood! COLONEL'S blood!

Bright—

Shudders—continuing examination of knife—finds letter on handle.

Name—on handle?

Looks up.

Lieut.—

FEEL!

Bright—

Follows initials on handle with forefinger.

"S. G."

Without speaking, lips form words "Steve Grigsby" — rises — clutching knife.

Me KNOW!

Lieut.—

You take knife—Mother Grigsby.

Bright—

ME KNOW!

Starts toward L. 2 E.

Posey—

Down L. quickly.

No! You SHALL NOT!

Stops Bright.

Lieut.—

Don't interfere, Miss Parker. This girl was a witness to the murder. She heard the dying Colonel say, "Steve Grigsby, you have killed me!"

Bright—

To C., quickly—facing Lieut.

Yes, and me hear YOU say, "I have saddle on Colonel's horse!"

Picture.

Lieut.—

Pause.

Bright Light listen."Steve Grigsby, you have killed me!" Blood on knife—name on handle—

Bright—

C. Shudders.

Oh!

Lieut.—

Take knife Mother Grigsby.

Exit R. 2 E.

Bright—

Pause.

Me go—Mother Grigsby.

Starts L.

Posey—

Stops Bright L. C.

No go NOW. Wait. Sit down.

Leads Bright up to bench C. and seats her.

Me read to Bright Light.

Bright—

WHAT read?

Clutching knife.

Posey—

Prayer-book in hand.

Me read prayer-book.

Opens book.

Bright—

Rises suddenly.

No! Me no like prayer-book. Me don't know pale-face God.

Posey—

Looking at prayer-book in hand—aside.

THAT'S no good.

Bright—

Knife in hand.

Me go—Mother Grigsby.

Starts down L.

Posey—

Stops Bright and gently seats her.

Bright Light, you love Colonel, eh?

Bright—

Yes.

Posey—

You love Colonel's wife—STELLA?

Bright—

Yes.

Posey—

Me Stella's sister—you love ME?

Bright—

Yes.

Posey—

Me—Steve's WIFE—You love Steve?

Bright—

Rises—enraged.

No!!! Me KILL Steve!

Knife upraised.

Posey—

Gently restrains her.

You kill Steve—you kill ME, Steve's wife! You kill Posey, you kill Posey's sister, Stella. All dead. Colonel dead. Bright Light kill ALL.

Bright—

Puzzled

ME—kill—all?

Knife extended in wonderment.

Posey—
Give ME knife.
Extends hand.
Bright—
Pause—ad lib. bus.—as explained.
My eyes no see—my HEART can see!
Slowly gives knife to Posey—goes down R.
Me go find INDIAN God.
Exit R. 2 E.
Posey—
I've saved him. I've saved Steve!
Looks at prayer-book in hand.
Religion you're no good. It's religion vs. horse sense, and religion isn't knee high to a grasshopper—"as Ikey says."
Looks at knife in hand.
Where the dickens am I going to hide THIS—in the well?
Goes to well—looks in and shakes head.
Nope. Blood and water don't mix.
Looks around stage.
In the cannon.
Up to cannon.
It was loaded this morning—I'll reload her.
Puts knife into mouth of cannon.
Now, you're "half-shot"—as Ikey is.
Discovers prayer-book still in hand.
Down C.
YOU—go down in the well.
Tosses book into well.
—And soak your head—"as Ikey is doing."
Exit R. 2 E.
Parson—
Enter L. 2 E.—followed by Ikey—with seven or eight prayer-books.
Here we are—now dump 'em all into that well—hold on, here's mine, too.
Produces prayer-book and puts it with others in Ikey's arms.
Now, there are all the prayer-books in the fort. Where's YOUR prayer-book?
R. of well L. C.
Ikey—
L.—below well.
I haven't any—I'm a METHODIST!
Parson—
Drop them in and hear 'em splash.
Looking down in well.

Ikey—

Drops books in well, L. C.—noiselessly.

Parson—

Pause—after books drop.

No splash.

Pause.

Good heaven. The Indians surround us and there's not a drop of water in the well.

Pause.

Go and get YOUR prayer-book.

Up C.

Ikey—

I'll go and find "three cannon balls"—mebbe THAT'LL satisfy him.

Exit L. 2 E.

Lieut. and Stella enter R. 2 E.—arm in arm.

Lieut.—

Parson, here we are—

Leaves Stella to R. of C.—remains L. of C.

We are ready—proceed with the ceremony.

Parson—

C.—behind Stella and Lieut.

I can't marry you.

Lieut.—

You CAN'T?

Posey enters R. 2 E.—remains up R. C.

Parson—

I CAN'T! There's not a prayer-book in the fort—and an Episcopal clergyman can't marry without the ritual. I can't hold in any longer. Hurrah for the Episcopal church! Hurrah for Steve Grigsby! Hurrah for Uncle Sam!

To R. corner.

Sam—

Appears on ramparts—up L. C.—coat off—left shoulder—in shirt and trousers—left shoulder bleeding.

The redskins!

Pistol in each hand.

All.

Posey and Stella R.—Parson and Lieut. L.

Indians!!

Sam—

Jumps from ramparts—down C.

Parson—they completely surround the fort—I couldn't get through—but I emptied my guns.

Shows pistols.

Lieut.—

L. C.

Go ahead with the marriage.

Stella R. C.

Sam—

C.—staggering.

WHAT marriage?

Parson—

R. Corner.

Stella and Lieut. Carter want to get married.

Sam—

With the Colonel dead in the house? They shan't DO it! I'M in command here and I forbid it.

Pause—staggers—faints and falls.

L. C.

Posey—

Runs L. C. and kneels beside Sam.

He's fainted! Papa, he's wounded!

Parson—

X's L. C. to Sam—quickly—kneels and looks at him.

The boy's shoulder is half shot away.

Rises.

Lieutenant, stop this nonsense and care for this wounded man.

C.

Lieut.—

L. Cor.

This is no nonsense. Your captain is unconscious—I am ranking officer in command, and I order the marriage to proceed.

Posey—

L. C.—kneeling beside Sam.

What says my sister?

Stella—

R. C.—hesitates.

I—

Lieut.—

Quickly.

Stella—think. I stand here, willing to MARRY you, when neither of us NEEDS it. Answer wisely.

Posey—

Rises R. of Lieut. quickly.

Say! Before Stella says "No," let ME talk. I don't know what a soldier would call you, but in plain American phraseology, you're "ROTTEN"—as Ikey says.

Goes up and kneels again beside Sam.

Parson—

C. Looks at Stella—inquiringly.

Stella?

Stella—

I say "Yes."

To R. of C.—extends hands to Lieut.

Lieut.—

To L. of C.—takes Stella's hand.

Parson, proceed with the ceremony.

Parson—

C.

I can't marry you without a ritual—and all the prayer-books in the fort are destroyed.

Lieut.—

All but ONE!

Produces book.

I discovered your clever subterfuge—NOW your confounded ritualism makes me winner. Takes this book and marry us.

Extends book.

Parson—

Takes book—opens it.

Page 91 you said?

Fingering pages as if quiescent.

Yes, here we are—page 91, 92, 93, 94—

Suddenly tears pages from book—throws book over stockade.

But without these pages the marriage ceremony cannot be performed.

Lieut.—

Drawing revolver.

But WITH those pages it SHALL be performed if an army revolver is any inducement?

Parson—

Grabs revolver—thrusting muzzle through leaves.

But Uncle Sam objects!

CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

Discovered: Sam unconscious in shirt and trousers on cot down C.—Bright on knees at foot of cot—Stella and Posey up L. C.—arms around each other—Lieut. up beside L. 3 E.—Ikey discovered C. D. on guard—Mrs. G. at head of cot C.—Parson bending over and examining Sam above cot C.—pause—rises—looks at Mrs. G.—bows head.

Mrs. G.—

Well, Parson?

Parson—

Some of the arteries leading from the heart are shot away—he is bleeding internally.

Posey—

Oh, papa, do something for him.

Parson—

He is beyond even a doctor's skill, and I can do nothing.

Mrs. G.—

You—you don't mean—?

Parson—

Sadly.

Be brave—he can't live through the day.

Mrs. G.—

Sinks on knees above bed.

My Steve—my boy—and only yesterday I quarrelled with him.

Sam moves feebly.

Stella—

Ssh! He is waking.

Posey—

Is he in great pain, papa?

Parson—

None to speak of—he is past that.

Turns up.

Sam—

Feebly.

Water! Water!!

Mrs. G.—

Water! Oh, Heavens! And there's not a drop in the fort.

Posey—

To Stella

Have you searched everywhere?

Stella—

Everywhere. There is absolutely no liquid of any kind—and the well is stone dry.

With Posey—to L. cor.

Bright—

Rises.

Me got little water.

Produces and gives can.

God bless you child.

Gives water to Sam.

Mrs. G.—

Oh, only a few drops.

Bright—

Give me can.

Extends hand and receives it.

Me go to Injuns—in woods—me get water.

Up L.—stops and listens.

Lieut.—

Down L. C.

The reds will never give her water—it will but expose to them our helpless condition.

Mrs. G.—

No matter—they will doubtless attack tonight anyway.

Lieut.—

It seems to me that the only hope in sight is surrender—

Sam—

Raises head.

Surrender? No! Fight! Fight!! Don't give in to them.

Calls.

Parson.

Parson—

Yes, my boy.

Down C. behind cot.

Sam—

YOU take command here—while I'm sick—don't surrender the women to the reds—get a gun—

Parson—

What! I? An Episcopalian minister—get a gun—

Bright—

Down L. of Parson—touches him on shoulder.

You COWARD, eh?

Parson—

I—I don't know—guess not—I—I really couldn't tell you.

Bright—

You want see Injuns scalp?

Parson—

No, I confess I have an unholy wish to break every Indian's head in the territory. The feeling is sinful, I know—I ought to forgive them and pray for them.

Bright—

YOU be big chief—he

Pointing toward Lieut.

He squaw man. Me get water.

Exit L. 3 E.

Stella—

I know these Cherokees so well—and their new chief Cross Dog is said to be without mercy. 'Twas he who put them on the warpath.

Parson—

Cross Dog! May his infernal red spirit roast in—what am I talking about? May the Heavenly Father pardon his crimes. Orderly!

Ikey down L. C.—salutes.

Did you examine the stores?

Ikey—

Yes, sir.

Parson—

How many guns have we?

Ikey—

Seven—all told.

Parson—

The idea of me—an Episcopalian minister—a man of the gospel—how many cartridges?

Ikey—

Half a hundred.

Parson—

Any powder to make some more?

Ikey—

A keg—nearly full.

Parson—

The infernal red women butchers—get thee behind me Satan—is the powder dry?

Ikey—

I think so.

Parson—

THINK—you ought to KNOW—in battle have a clear head, a quick eye, a clean gun, keep your powder dry—Oh, I fear I'm doing a wicked thing—go and see about that powder.

Ikey salutes and exits C. D. R.

Lieut.—

Going up L.

You'll find me in my room in case anything new turns up.

Exit L. 3 E.

Sam—

Mother—

Mrs. G.—

Yes, dear.

Sam—

Have you forgiven—your coward?

Mrs. G.—

Oh, Steve, don't crush me with reproach—I was wrong—forgive—

Sam—

Forgive—why, come to think, I'd most forgotten it—it's better to forget—then you can't remember what you've got to forgive.

Pause.

Oh, I wish I could sleep!

Mrs. G.—

And you shall, if you can.

Kisses him and raises.

Come, girls, we MUST find some water.

Up C.—aside to Parson.

Call me instantly if—

Pause—indicating Sam.

Parson—

Up R. of C.

Yes.

Mrs. G. exit L. 3 E.—bowed head.

Stella and Posey exit together L. 3 E.—Posey sobbing—Stella consoling her.

Sam—

Parson.

Parson—

Down above cot.

Yes, my boy.

Sam—

I'm dying, ain't I?

Parson—

We still hope for the best.

Sam—

Well, I reckon that's about the best thing that could happen to me.

Parson—

Why?

Sam—

Why, you see—I love her—and SHE loves STEVE—

Parson—

Who?

Sam—

Posey.

Parson—

My God!

Turns away.

Sam—

Parson—get me my old cowboy duds, will you, and my belt and guns—I—I'd kinder like to die with my boots on—kinder—

Parson—

Yes.

Up to L. 3 E.—calls.

Posey!

Pause.

Steve wants to see you.

Down C. again.

Sam—

How'd you guess it, Parson?

Parson—

Brokenly.

I'll get your clothes.

Exit C. D. L.

Posey—

Enters L. 3 E.—wiping eyes.

Did you want me, Steve, at last? I thought you'd forgotten me?

Sam—

Aside.

Here's another new deal—bidding a girl good bye—wonder what Steve would do?

Posey—

Down above cot—C.

Steve, is there anything I can do, Steve?

Sam—

Say, don't call me "Steve"—I never liked the name of "Steve"—my brother had the best name—"Sam"—he always had the best

Looks in her face.

—Of everything. Say, call me "Sam"—just once—say "Sam, I love you."

Posey—

Bends over him.

Sam, I love you—and you haven't kissed me in two days.

Face close to his.

Sam looks at her—pause feebly reaches for her and gets her hand—slowly raises it to lips and kisses it.

Why did you kiss my hand—

Pause.

—instead of my mouth?

Sam—

Looking at her—long pause.

I guess we'd better let it go at that.

Posey—

My poor boy.

Hands over his hair.

Here's your cigarette case.

Produces it.

While we were scrapping—I kissed it—several times—do you think you'd like to smoke?

Offers it.

Sam—

Takes cig. case, feebly.

No—I want to sleep—

Aside.

—And forget.

Buries face again in pillow.

Posey—

Rises.

Call me if you want anything.

Kisses his hair.

I'll not be far away.

Exit L. 3 E.

Sam—

Raises head, feebly.

She loves Steve—STEVE—always Steve—she even loves his cigarette case—

Looks at it.

Damn cigarette case—

Punches it with fist feebly.

Dig for your brains, Sam Grigsby—wind 'em up—set 'em a'going—for you've got to remember—while you're alive that you've got to forget.

Buries face again in pillow.

Parson—

Enters C. D. L. with cowboy clothes.

Here they are, my boy.

Down above cot C.

Steve! Steve!!

Pause.

Sam—I mean.

Pause.

Asleep—poor lad. I'll leave them here—right beside him—so he'll see them the first thing when he wakes up.

Place chair at head of bed and belt. etc., on edges of cot and clothes thereon. Tiptoes to L. 3 E.

I must find some water—if I can.

Exit L. 3 E.

Lieut.—

Enters hurriedly—C. D.

Impossible to get away—impossible—in every direction Indian feathers are bobbing among the trees—worth your life to venture outside.

Produces money.

Can't find a safe place to hide THIS—fear every minute I'll be arrested for the Colonel's murder—and searched. Damned Indian girl.

Replaces money in pocket.

Bright—

Enters L. 3 E.—right hand containing knife behind her—can in left hand.

Lieut.—

I don't trust her.

Sees Sam.

Grigsby—

Looks at him—in whisper.

Asleep.

Does not notice Bright.

Bright—

Speaks in whisper—sees clothes—moving slowly toward C.

Me no find water.

Turns can upside down.

Lieut.—

In whisper—sees clothes.

A suit of buckskin—

Picks them up.

Cowboy clothes—wonder where they come from—

Bright—

In whisper.

But in the woods, me found—

Lieut.—

In whisper.

In these clothes—I might be able to get through the redskin lines—

Bright—

In whisper.

Sticking in tree, me found—

Lieut.—

In whisper.

I'll take them—I'll put them on.

Starts L. to C.—with clothes.

Bright—

In whisper.

Me found THIS!

Produces knife from behind back—presents it so it touches Lieut's breast.

Lieut.—

Starts back.

You.

Bright—

Who YOU?

Reaches out hand—touches his arm and at same time buckskin coat.

Huh! Lieutenant! Huh! Injun clothes?

Lieut.—

Ssh! Don't wake him—

Indicating Sam.

—Grigsby.

Bright—

What for YOU got buckskin?

Points to clothes.

You make no good Injun. You CHEAP brave!

Lieut.—

Give me that knife.

Bright—

You take—

Extends it

—And you get it—in HEART!

Vindictively—then places knife in bosom.

Lieut.—

X's L—aside.

I dare not harm her—I MUST get away. That Indian girl is more dangerous to me than a hundred wounded captains.

Exit L. 3 E.—taking clothes.

Sam—

Moans and raises head slightly.

Water! Water!!

Bright—

Poor Captain.

Pause—looking at Sam.

My eyes no SEE—but they do CRY.

Wipes eyes.

Sam—

Opens eyes.

Ah! Bright Light—you find water, eh?

Bright—

Turns can upside down.

No water—Injun see me—drive me back.

Suddenly dropping can to stage—R. C.

Me know where find little fire-water in Lieutenant Carter's room.

Going to L. 3 E.

Me get he—me STEAL he!

Exits L. 3 E.

Parson—

Enters C. D. L.

Not a drop of water to be found.

Down C.—behind cot.

My boy, did you find your clothes?

Sam—

No.

Parson—

That's strange—I left them on that chair

Ikey—

Enter quickly C. D. R.

Captain!

Down L. C.

Parson—

What is it?

Ikey—

There's a big Indian coming toward the fort—and he's waving his shirt in the air!

Parson—

X's R. to window.

A white flag—I don't understand THAT.

Down C.—behind cot.

Captain Grigsby, a redskin is approaching with a flag of truce.

Sam—

Do what you think best, Parson—I'm not feeling well enough to give orders.

Parson—

To Ikey.

Summon Lieut. Carter at once.

Up to C. D.

I'll meet the redskin and bring him here.

Exit C. D. R.

Ikey—

Goes toward L. 3 E.

Posey Enters L. 3 E.

Where is Lieutenant Carter.

Posey—
I saw him going to his room a moment ago.
Ikey exit L. 3 E.
Down L. C.—to cot.
Did you have a good nap, Steve?

Mrs. G.—
Enters C. D.
What does this communication mean?
Down behind cot.
Are you worse my son?

Sam—
No, mother—
Smiling feebly.
—I'm as bad as I'll ever get in THIS world.

Stella—
Enters C. D. L.—looking off C. R.
Father—with an Indian. It is Cross Dog.
L. of C. D.

Parson—
Enters C. D. R.
Come in, Cross Dog.
Down R.

Cross Dog—
Enters C. D. R.—down R. C.—slowly—carries white rag—in full wat paint—etc.

Parson—
Sit down.
Places chair toward Indian.

Cross Dog—
Huh!
Grunts—sits, squatting on floor—R. C

Sam—
Ask him what he wants.

Ikey—
Enter C. D. L.
Found the Lieutenant at the stable.
Up R. of C. D.

Lieut.—
Enter C. D. L.—in shirt sleevs.
What's up?
Down L.

Parson—
To Cross Dog.
What does the great Cross Dog want?

Cross Dog—

Picks up empty can.

No water, eh? Me got heap water.

Produces can from under blanket.

Posey—

L. of cot C.

Cross Dog, for God's sake give me some for the Captain—he's dying!

Cross Dog—

Bright Light come—want water—Injun no give. Cross Dog got heap water—HE no give.

Pours water on stage.

Mrs. G.—

Oh, heavens!

Goes to Parson R.

Posey—

To Cross Dog.

You—you're a big stiff—you're worse'n that—you're a DOG.

Cross Dog—

Yes. Me CROSS Dog.

Parson—

In the name of humanity, Cross Dog, stop this torture—and tell us what you demand.

Cross Dog—

You got heap money—you give Injun money and fort—me let you go to Gen. Butler.

Parson—

Aside.

That fatal money—NOW 'tis LIVES it could buy.

Lieut.—

You'll not harm the women?

Cross Dog—

No want pale-face squaw—

Looks around at women.

—All heap ugly.

Posey—

L. C.

Well! I like THAT.

Lieut.—

I should advise a surrender—

Parson—

But the money—

Suddenly stops.

Lieut.—

Smiles.

We can throw ourselves upon their mercy.

Sam—

The mercy of a redskin? Never! Don't trust the white rag when it's in red hands.

To Cross Dog.

Go! We will NOT surrender. Gen. Butler is on his way here with a thousand soldiers—he may be here any moment. We will fight to the last.

Lieut.—

But, I think—

Sam—

To Lieut.

You have no right to think! I am still commanding officer here, and while I'm alive I'LL do all the thinking in this fort.

Ikey—

Down R. of Lieut.

Let me offer you a sample of my Chili chewing gum—it'll take the bad taste out of your mouth.

Offers it.

Lieut.—

Bah!

Turn away L.

Cross Dog—

Rises—to Sam.

You no give up?

Mrs. G.—

R.—with Parson.

You heard my son's reply—go—we will fight to the last!

Cross Dog—

Faces Mrs. G.—contemptuously.

Huh!

Turns to Sam.

Sick pale-face heap LIE. No soldier come from General Butler—he not know me on war path.

Parson—

R. Cor.—aside.

My God, he speaks true.

Cross Dog—

Me no ask again.

Throws down white rag—pulls at halyards of flag—C.

Huh! BAD flag!

Spits up at it.

Me pull down.

Starts to do it.

Sam—

You do, and I'll shoot right in amongst your thoughts.

Pulls pistol.

Cross Dog—

Huh!

Pause up C. D.

YOU pull down when SUN goes down—or me KILL ALL!

Exit C. D. R.

Ikey—

Picks up white rag—up to C. D.—calls off R. after Cross Dog.

Take this along and go down the hill in rag-time.

Posey—

Up C. D. and takes white rag down to Lieut.

Better give it to the Lieutenant—it just matches the color of his cheeks.

Offers it.

Lieut.—

Your faces will all be white in death before nightfall.

X's to Sam.

And YOU can die with the knowledge that the blood of these women is on your head!

Up to C. D.—aside.

I'll get the horse saddled and then I'm off—those buckskin clothes shall be my salvation.

Exit C. D. L.

Sam—

Mother, did I do right?

Mrs. G.—

To Sam—C.

You did right, my son.

Kisses him.

Sam—

I thought it was about what Steve Grigsby ought to do. I—I'd like to see the Parson alone a minute—I have something to confess.

Mrs. G.—

As you wish, my boy. Come, girls—let us continue searching—we MAY find some water.

Exit C. D. L.

Posey kisses Sam and exits C. D. L.

Parson—

To Ikey.

Return to your post, orderly, and let us know the moment you see any suspicious movement in the woods.

Ikey salutes and exits C. D. R.

Stella—

Call me if he needs anything, father—I'll be in the next room.

Exit C. D. L.

Sam—

Parson—I didn't tell her.

Parson—

Posey?

Sam—

No, I COULDN'T tell her. She loves Steve too much. YOU tell her after I'm gone.

Pause.

Parson, where's my coat?

Bright—

Enters C. D. L.—wearing coat—down C.

Parson—

R. C.

I left it on that chair.

Bright—

Me find fire-water—in buckskin coat pocket.

Produces flask.

Me steal fire-water—me steal buckskin coat, too.

Extends flask.

Parson—

Takes whiskey.

Bright Light—you're an angel.

X's to cot and gives drink to Sam.

Bright—

C.

Yes, me RED angel.

Sam—

Ah! That's life.

Sees Bright.

Why, THERE'S my coat.

Parson—

Bright Light, did you steal it?

Bright—

Yes.

Takes off coat.

Sam—

Well, ask her for the pants that go with it.

Bright.—

Me no steal pants. Me no WEAR pants. Me steal coat from Lieutenant.

Sam—

Wonder what HE wants of my clothes. Put the coat on, Parson.

Parson helps to put coat on right arm and shoulder.

That's far enough—HALF on—I'm only about half a man now, anyway.

Lieut.—

Enters quickly L. 3 E.—in cowboy pants and white shirt.

That coat!

Down C.—quickly.

Sam—

What about it?

Lieut.—

Confused—yet eager.

There's—something in the pocket I want—a flask of whiskey.

Sam—

Puts hand in R. coat pocket—draws out package of money.

There's something ELSE in the pocket, too.

Parson—

R. C.

It's the money!

Sam—

Extending it.

In the safe, quick.

Parson seizes money—rushes toward safe L.—is met L. C. by Lieut.—struggle—Lieut. forces Parson back to R.—bends him backward over table.

Stella enters C. D. L.—remains up C.—excited.

Lieut.—

Aha. I've got it!

Secures money—Parson reaching for it—Lieut. holds it up high behind him.

Stella rushes down R. C.—snatches money from Lieut.'s hand—rushes across L.—puts money in safe—closes door and turns combination—then up L. C.

Lieut.—

You she devil!

Rushes across to safe—tries to open it.

Locked!

Turns to Sam—pause—suddenly springs to cot—snatches pistols from Sam's belt—levels them.

Hands up!

Sam—

Puts up right hand—coat hanging on shoulder.

One's the best I can do, pard.

Lieut.—

Come here!

Backs slowly L. to safe.

Sam—

Rises feebly—staggering toward safe.

You're the first fellow that's got the drop on me in ten years.

Lieut.—

L. of safe L.—leaning on it—pistols leveled.

Now, Steve Grigsby, open that safe!

Posey entér L. 3 E.—Mrs. G. enter C. D. L.

Sam—

R. of Safe.

I'm NOT Steve Grigsby—I'm his twin brother SAM—I don't know the combination, and you can go to hell!

Leaning on safe.

PICTURE.

Lieut. drops arms—dumbfounded—leaning against safe.

Sam—

Quickly snatches pistol and presents it.

My turn now! Drop that gun!

Lieut. does so.

Kick it over to the Parson.

Lieut. does so.

That's all.

Lowers pistol.

Parson—

Picks up pistol—suddenly looks at it.

Sam, this gun is empty.

Sam—

Examines his pistol.

So is THIS.

Pause.

Lieutentant, I don't know which of us got sold the worst.

Staggers—drops pistol—is caught by Parson over cot– and laid down.

Bright sits L of table R.

Parson—

Half aside.

My God, the boy is dying! Sam!

Pause.

Sam!!

Mrs. G.—

Down behind cot.

Did I hear you call him "Sam"?

Parson bows head affirmatively—R. C

My boy!

Drops on knees above cot.

Sam—

Very feebly.

Parson, arrest that man—

Points feebly to Lieut.

—For MURDER!

Lieut.—

L. Cor.

By what authority do you order my arrest if you are NOT STEVE Grigsby?

Sam—

Smiles.

You can't prove that I'm not Steve Grigsby—till Steve comes back.

Posey—

Around L. and below cot.

Then you're not my Steve?

Sam—

No, I'm your Sam—and mother's Sam—

Passes hand feebly over Mrs. G.'s hair.

—That loves you both—most as much as Steve does.

Buries face in pillow, sobbing.

Stella—

To foot of cot—L. C.

Sam, can you forgive ME?

Kneels.

Sam—

Yes, I reckon that's what Steve would do.

Feebly.

Posey!

Posey kneels below cot.

You've got my love—give it to Steve—he's got a heart-flush, Queen high—I—I've got nothing but a straight and I didn't fill it.

Pause.

I reckon you'd better give me another kiss.

Kisses her.

—I kiss you—good bye—just because—that's what Steve would do.

Dies.

Bright, seated R.—begins chant.

Mrs. G.—

Raises head.

What is that?

Parson—

That's the death song of the Cherokees.

Mrs. G.—

Is he—is he—?

Parson nods head affirmatively—kneels R. C.—at head of cot.

My boy!

Buries head in pillow again.

Lieut.—

L. cor. aside.

Now's my chance—they won't notice me go—I'd rather risk the redskins than courtmartial here.

Steathily up to C. D.—about to exit.

Ikey—

Enters C. D. R.

Let me offer you a sample of Smith & Wesson revolvers.

Presents it—Lieut. goes down L.

Mrs. G.—

Rises quickly—up to C. D.

Give ME that revolver—I'LL keep him from getting away.

Takes pistol and stands in C. D.

Parson—

Rises.

Your help, my man. Let us lay him under the flag.

R. C.

Ikey—

Down L. C.—helps Parson place cot and Sam up C.—above flagstaff—chant stops.

Posey up L. C. is comforted by Stella.

Lieut.—

I am commanding officer now. Orderly, pull down that flag.

L. Cor.

Parson—

R. C.

Orderly, that flag must NOT come down.

Bright—

Rises.

No pull flag down—Indian scalp me now.

Lieut.—

Did you hear me, orderly? Pull down that flag.

Ikey—

L. C.

I won't do it!

Lieut.—
What!

Ikey—
I won't do it. I minded the Captain—

Indicates Sam.

—But I WON'T mind YOU!

Lieut.—
Sir, you wear the uniform of a soldier of the United States—you owe obedience to your superior officer.

Ikey—
I'm NOT a regularly enlisted soldier—

Quickly takes off coat and cap.

—I'm a private citizen of the state of Illinois, and I won't pull down that flag!

Lieut.—
I'LL pull it down!

Rushes up C. to flag staff and pulls down flag.

Posey—

To R. of staff.

Catch it, Stella—don't let the flag touch the ground.

She and Stella catch and hold flag before cot.
Doubles change here.

Parson—

Up C.

Lieutenant Carter, I assume command here—you are under arrest for the murder of Col. Cavendish.

To Ikey.

Guard that door.

Indicates L. E. 3 and X's to L. cor.

Lieut.—

Ikey stands in L. 3 E.

Bah! You'll all be dead in an hour—I'll take my chances with the redskins.

Glances quickly at both C. D. and L. 3 E.

Ah, the window!

Rushes up toward window R. 3 E.

Steve—

Leaps through window R. 3 E.—haggard and covered with dust.

Pull up that flag!

All—
Steve!!!!

Lieut. goes again to L. Cor.

Steve—

Butler's coming with 800 men—be here in ten minutes—pull up Old Glory!

Ikey pulls up flag.

Discovering Mrs. G. kneeling beside double on cot.

PICTURE.

Parson—

L. C.

Steve, your brother Sam.

Steve takes off hat—drops on knee at head of cot.

To Mrs. G.

Mother, is he a coward NOW?

Mrs. G. puts arm around Steve.

Ikey places hand on Lieut.'s shoulder

L. C.

CURTAIN.

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